

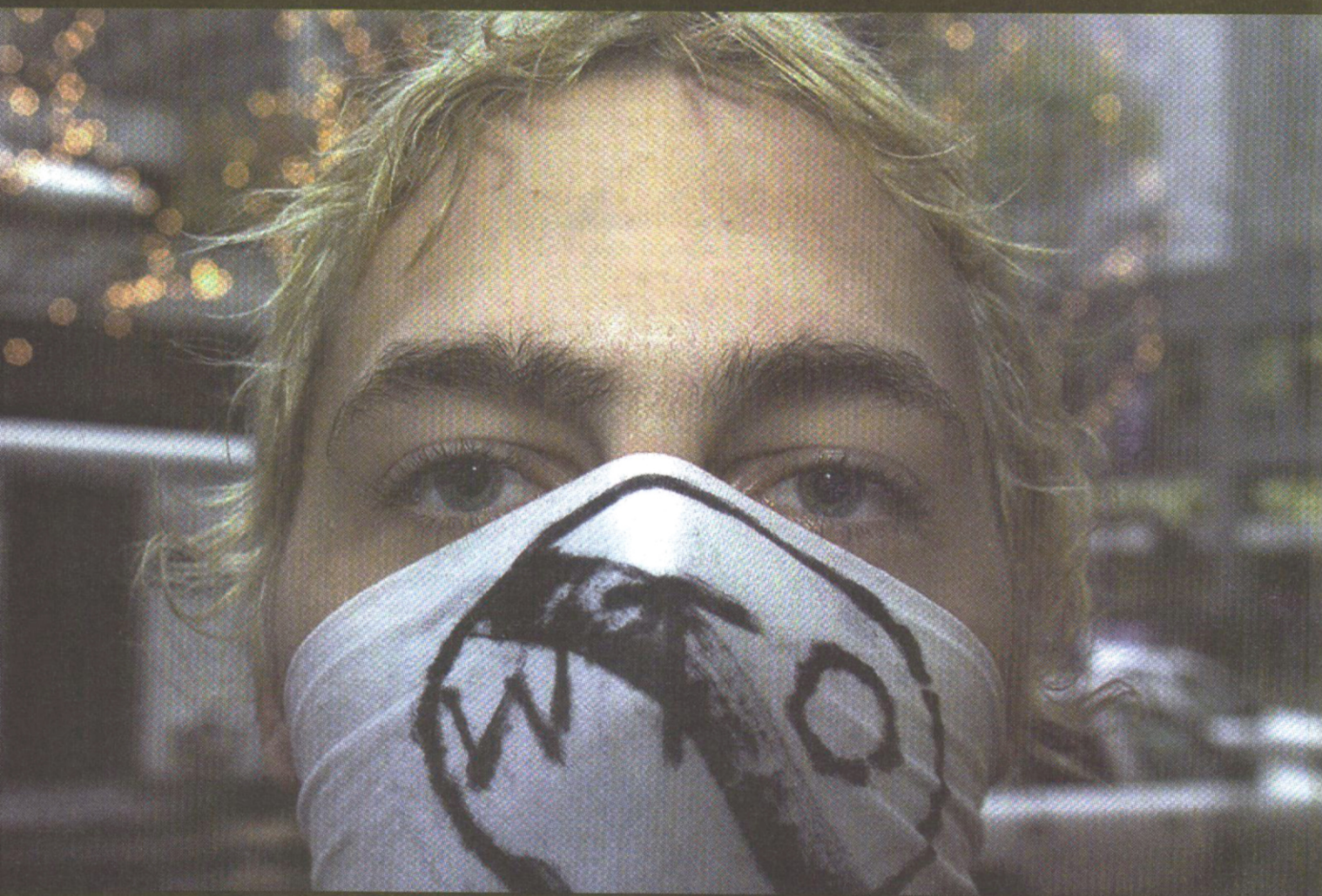
FRANKENFOODS • NORTHERN IRELAND'S LASTING PEACE?

In These Times

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January 10, 2000

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Letters

Noblesse Oblige

Barbara Ehrenreich asks affluent women to share their wealth with those far less well off rather than to become less wealthy by campaigning for a redistribution of wealth ("Doing It for Ourselves," Nov. 28). Such noblesse oblige leaves everything in its place and, ironically, answers the question in the subtitle of her article—can feminism survive class polarization?—in the affirmative, but conservatively.

Richard La Brecque
Lexington, Kentucky

I especially liked Barbara Ehrenreich's recent article on feminism and class polarization. The issue in most liberals' minds (and I mean classic liberals, including many whom Americans would call conservative) is whether there is equal opportunity for upward mobility, not whether there is an "up" at all. The liberal feminism Ehrenreich critiques, like the liberal civil rights movement, has always assumed this issue of equality of opportunity, not equality of outcomes. Both movements have thus led to advancement of some women or blacks into the middle class, but have left those "with less ability" behind.

What I don't see people on the left grappling with is the fundamental liberal attitude that assumes an inevitable inequality of outcomes, even in the case of a hypothetical "even playing field." They just think it's natural that people have different natural abilities that, on an even playing field, would lead to a natural (but still unequal) distribution of wealth and power. The subaltern may resent a domineering boss, but doesn't question the whole idea of there being a boss, or an owner, or whatever.

As long as that's true, the only conceivable remedy is a kind of liberal charity or noblesse oblige, which Ehrenreich suggests at the end of her article (new furniture or a check to a women's shelter?). That could, of course, take the institutional form of a generous social-democratic welfare state (which I would happily embrace for lack of anything better), but its motivation would still be charity, not a radical belief in total equality.

Chris Nielson
Portland, Oregon

Welfare and Mothers

To hear Mimi Abramovitz tell it, what is best for teen-age girls of the poorer classes is not to get an education and learn to support themselves, but to be paid by the federal government to produce illegitimate children ("Bad to Worse," Nov. 28). Her program, which Jesse Jackson calls with his usual aptness of phrase "babies having babies," is so implausible as a way of elevating the condition of the poor, so contrary to the experience of the last half century, that it is a wonder that anyone would support it other than perhaps the prison industry.

Abramovitz would discourage the poor from marriage—after all, men are no good and marriage is an institution of which feminists do not or should not approve. She takes this line despite the high correlation of two-parent families with every index of individual and social well being. It is an example of the triumph of ideology over common sense (and moral sense) that has marginalized progressives in this country and led so many among the working class to seek leadership elsewhere among the Ronald Reagans, Pat Buchanans and Louis Farrakhans.

Joe Willingham
Berkeley, California

Mimi Abramovitz's insightful article on the travesty of welfare "reform" falls short on one count. She fails to note that more than two-thirds of those being hit by today's punitive welfare policies are women and children of color. Current policies not only undermine the capacity of impoverished women to make their own decisions about work and family life. They reinforce prevailing patterns of racial inequality. Attention needs to be given to welfare reform as an expression of welfare racism.

Ken Neubeck and Noel Cazenave
Storrs, Connecticut

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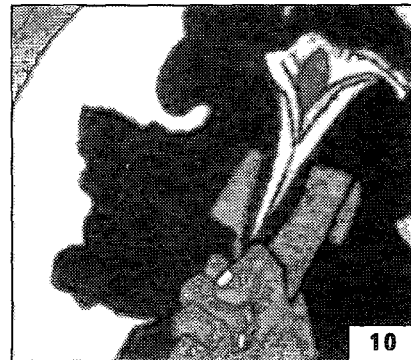
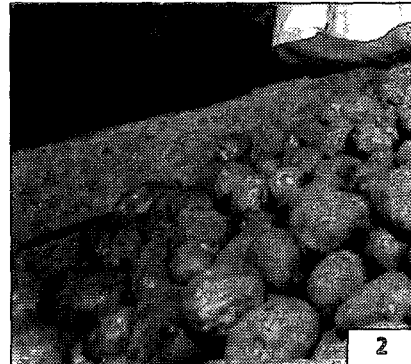
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No Small (Genetic) Potatoes

A British researcher raises doubts about genetically engineered food

The bright future of bioengineered crops may have dimmed, thanks to Arpad Pusztai, a renowned British biochemist whose research has raised potentially serious public health questions about genetically engineered food and whose persistence in speaking out has raised the ire of the biotech scientific establishment.

The story begins in August 1998, when Pusztai, a scientist at Rowett Research Institute in Aberdeen, Scotland, appeared on the British television program *The World in Action* to report that transgenic foods (foods that are bioengineered to include a gene from another species) may be unsafe. His research indicated that rats fed transgenic potatoes suffered from damaged immune systems and stunted growth.

Pusztai fed the rats potatoes that had been genetically engineered to contain lectin from a snowdrop bulb to make them pest resistant. Lectins are sugar-binding proteins that can provide protection from insects, nematodes and some diseases. According to Pusztai, who is one of the world's foremost authorities on lectins, the rats who ate these high-tech potatoes showed evidence of organ damage and poor brain development. This experiment was the first independent study—one not sponsored by a biotech corporation—to examine the effects of bioengineered food on mammals.

"We are assured that this is absolutely safe and that no harm can come to us from eating [genetically engineered food]. But if you gave me the choice now, I wouldn't eat it," he said on TV, warning that the food industry was treating the public like "unwitting guinea pigs."

In an attempt to quell the resulting public furor, Rowett Institute Director Philip James, who had approved Pusztai's TV appearance, said the research results didn't exist. He fired Pusztai, broke up his research team, halted the six other similar projects his team was then working on and seized his data. Pusztai, who under the terms of his contract was gagged, was unable to respond to his critics.

The biotech PR apparatus went into effect on both sides of the Atlantic. Val Giddings, of the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) in Washington, applauded Pusztai's dismissal. Speaking to *Biotechnology Newswatch*, an industry journal, he damned the press for not being more skeptical of Pusztai's statements, pointing out that his results had never been published in a



By Joel Bleifuss

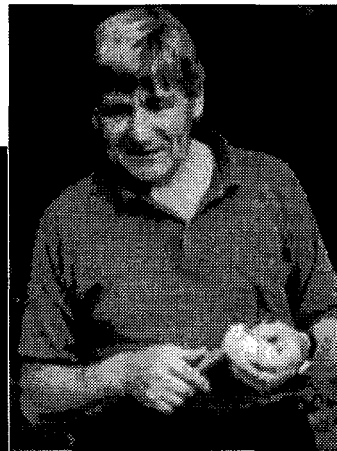
peer-reviewed journal. "This is a study that should never have seen the light of day," he said.

At Monsanto, the only corporation producing transgenic potatoes, spokesman Alyssa Hollier told *Biotechnology Newswatch*, "This really has nothing to do with us," adding that the company's transgenic potatoes, which are different than those used in the study, are "not approved in Europe right now." In February, however, it came out that the Rowett Institute had received a \$224,000 grant from Monsanto prior to

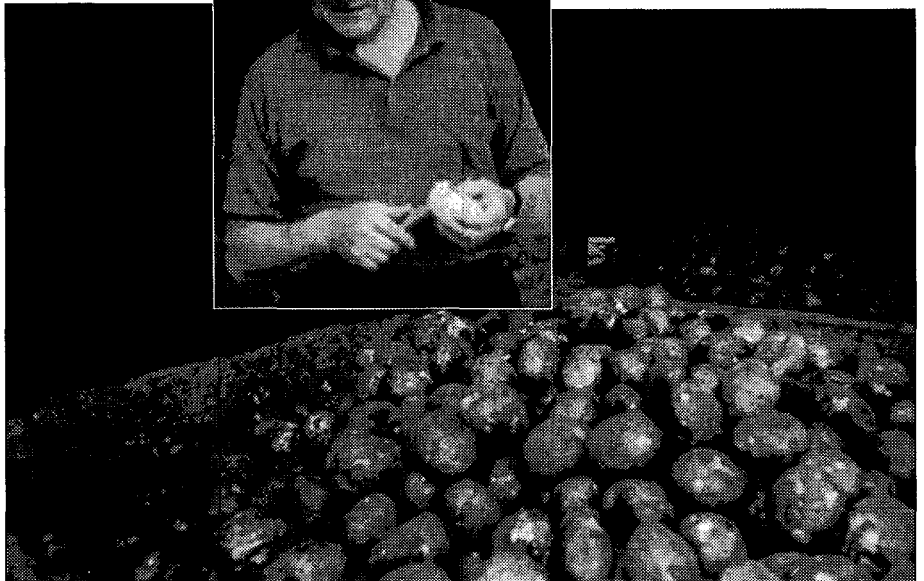
Pusztai's interview and subsequent firing.

In March, the Rowett Institute released an internal audit, which revealed that Pusztai actually had completed the research he referred to in his TV appearance. Apparently, the dispute over the August program was due to an inaccurate press release that the Rowett Institute—without Pusztai's approval—had issued prior to the program that referred to a completely different experiment.

That same month, the institute, in response to press criticism and an emerging House of Commons inquiry was in the offing, released Pusztai from the terms of his contract that had



Arpad Pusztai, the British scientist whose research has shaken the foundations of bioengineering, carves a potato.



gagged him, and allowed him access to his research data.

The Royal Society, Britain's premier scientific body, entered the debate in May. Examining neither the material nor the research data submitted by Pusztai, a society review panel nonetheless deemed his work "flawed" and concluded:

"We found no convincing evidence of adverse effects from [genetically engineered] potatoes."

In the wake of that review, the *Independent* reported that the Blair government had launched a "cynical public relations exercise" to "convince the public that it is determined to protect them, and the environment, against risks from genetically modified crops" while the government's "real intention is to buy time for industry to develop the crops." The *Independent* based its report on a confidential memo from the office of Jack Cunningham, the minister responsible for coordinating the nation's genetic engineering policy. The memo said in part, "The Office of Science and Technology is compiling a list of eminent scientists to be available for

This experiment was the first independent, non-industry study to examine the effects of bioengineered food on mammals.

broadcast interviews and to author articles. These individuals should be alerted and be prepared to offer comment." The memo goes on to say that the attacks on Pusztai by the Royal Society provide "a platform for them to trail the Government's Key Messages."

Pusztai pressed his case in the media. "I am in a situation I cannot get out of now," he told the *Sunday Herald*, a Scottish paper. "I am the only one with data that shows there are problems. I have a choice: apologize for being incorrect or keep going, and I know I am correct."

Then Prince Charles entered the fray. A longtime critic of bioengineering, in December 1998 he had questioned the safety of bioengineered food on his royal Web site. According to the *Sunday Express*, Blair, in a highly unusual move, phoned Buckingham Palace "to advise the Prince to withdraw the Web site comments [and] ... to refrain from any public comments." The prince refused and, following the release of the Royal Society review of Pusztai's work and the leak of the confidential memorandum, Charles published an article in the *Daily Mail* that asked: "Do existing laws protect us? Why are the rules for approving genetically modified foods so much less stringent than new medicines using the same technology? ... What sort of world do we want to live in? Are we going to allow the industrialization of life itself—redesigning the natural world for the sake of convenience?" Soon after that he met privately with Pusztai and observed that he had been "cruelly" treated.

The controversy died down, only to blow up again this fall when *The Lancet*, the prestigious British medical journal, published a peer-reviewed paper Pusztai had co-authored. He reported that rats fed transgenic potatoes with the added snowdrop lectin experienced a thickening in their small intestines, which indicates an adverse reaction to the transgenic food. This change was not observed in two control groups, one of which was fed plain potatoes and the other potatoes mixed with the same lectin. Pusztai's study raised the possibility that this thickening

was caused not by the added lectin but by the process of genetic-engineering itself.

Indeed, Pusztai suspects, though he has no proof since his research was halted, that the problems observed in rats fed the transgenic potatoes were caused not by the added snowdrop lectin, but by the genes that were used in transferring the snowdrop lectin to the potato. "All the presently used genetically modified material has been created by essentially the same technology," he told the *Sunday Herald*. "If there really is a problem, it won't just apply to the potatoes but probably to all other transgenes." The implications are enormous. In 1999, one-third of the corn and one-half of the soybeans planted in the United States were genetically engineered.

The condemnation from the pro-genetic engineering scientific establishment was immediate. The Royal Society accused *The Lancet* of being "breath-takingly arrogant" for publishing Pusztai's research. The *Guardian* reported that two days before the publication of the Pusztai paper, *Lancet* editor Richard Horton had been warned by a senior member of the Royal Society, British Academy of Medical Sciences President Richard Lachmann, that his job would be in jeopardy if he published Pusztai's research. Horton told the *Guardian* he was called "immoral" and told that publication of the paper would "have implications for his personal position as editor." Lachmann, who denies the charges, is on the scientific advisory board of the pharmaceutical corporation SmithKline Beecham, which is heavily invested in biotech ventures.

The most benign interpretation of Pusztai's research is that the problem could be specific to the experimental transgenic potatoes he studied. More ominously, the adverse effects on the rats could be caused by the cauliflower mosaic virus promoter, a marker widely used in genetic engineering. "The study that Pusztai did should be redone to tease out what exactly is going on with the potatoes," says Michael Hansen, a research associate at Consumers Union. "But for the folks that criticize it, his study is still a much better-designed study than the industry-sponsored feeding studies I have seen in peer-reviewed literature that deal with Round-Up Ready soybeans or BT corn. Pusztai's are the kinds of experiments that need to be done with engineered foods."

Yet no such independent, government-supported research into the effects of genetically engineered foods on mammals is now being carried out in either the United Kingdom or the United States, where they have been given a clean bill of health by the Food and Drug Administration. Responding to a letter to the editor from Lachmann in *The Lancet*, Pusztai writes, "Lachmann says the experiments need to be repeated. We would be happy to oblige. If our experiments are so poor why have they not been repeated in the past 16 months? It was not we who stopped the work."

Could it be that the biotech industry fears the results of independent research could erase its enormous investment in this untested technology?

"We don't need genetically modified food in this country," Pusztai told the *Sunday Herald*. "But British politicians can only see profits. They want a share, and to hell with the consequences. It is a short-sighted policy. It happened with the BSE [Mad Cow] crisis, and make no mistake—it is happening again." ■

The Kids Are All Right

By Craig Aaron

Nothing sums up the promise of the protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle like a sign spotted at the labor rally on Nov. 30: "Teamsters and Turtles—Together at Last." Sure, there are plenty of details and differences to be ironed out, but this could be the start of something big.

"The Battle in Seattle" was portrayed in much of the mainstream media as a showdown between black-hooded anarchist ninjas and boisterous, body-armored riot police. But while the violent, unprovoked police crackdown was shameful, even criminal, it was ultimately a sideshow. "The terms of the free trade debate have forever been changed; no amount of tear gas or police harassment of demonstrators after the fact changed the bottom line," Geov Parrish wrote in the *Seattle Weekly*. "For one day, a ragtag army of nonviolent global citizens spoke—and the world listened."

There has been a lot of talk about Seattle as some sort of throwback to the '60s. Indeed, neoliberal commentators have tried to portray the protests as the last gasp of the old left dinosaur—an attack on the bogeyman of globalization by unrepentant, tree-hugging hippies and myopic union members. "The core of the anti-trade movement is the leftover left," Charles Krauthammer sneered in *Time*. "Having had little to do since the fall of the 'socialist camp' a decade ago, the left finally found its voice in Seattle."

Krauthammer is right about one thing. The left did find a voice. But it was the age of unfettered corporate capitalism that got pushed a little closer toward extinction. Not to take anything away from the legions of veteran organizers and activists who have dedicated decades to fighting the good fight, but the real story of Seattle was the youth.

After all, Generation X (for lack of a better term) is supposed to be a group of apathetic, narcissistic kids weaned on Reaganomics and Baby Gap. Maybe they are. "Turning points in our nation's political history, occasioned by the collapse of an existing civic and political consensus, have usually been accompa-

nied by rampant individualism, weakened institutions and heightened levels of political alienation," explained Ted Halstead in an essay on Gen X politics in the August *Atlantic Monthly*. "But such periods of civic unrest have also stimulated new political agendas."

For that generation, my generation, Seattle could be a defining moment (even for those of us who weren't there). Gen X has felt the brunt of downsizing, temporary employment and benefit cutbacks; young people make up a large chunk of the more than 40 million Americans

The real story of Seattle was the youth. The protests radicalized a new generation of potential leaders.

without health insurance. They fear growing economic insecurity and inequality. At the same time, they are most concerned about issues of environmental conservation and human rights. Seattle showed that within the various interest groups and issues—from Teamsters to turtles, Zapatistas to sweatshops—lie the seeds of a common political agenda centered on the idea that

the global market should be governed by values other than profit maximization.

Most important, Seattle radicalized a new generation of potential leaders. Consider Stephanie Lane, a University of Chicago student who also happens to be an *In These Times* intern. Though Stephanie already was active in campus politics and the anti-sweatshop movement, Seattle was an epiphany. She was arrested with hundreds of others while peacefully marching downtown on the morning of Dec. 1. They were detained on a bus at the Sand Point Naval Station for 14 hours, refusing to disembark unless they were guaranteed lawyers and phones. They were finally forced off with pepper spray. After two nights in the county jail, Stephanie was arraigned and released. Outside the jail at a vigil for the

other prisoners, she heard that the talks had been canceled without any agreement on a new round.

"My life has completely changed," she wrote in an e-mail message after returning home. "So many people have now become charged, radicalized activists. And the word WTO has spread like wildfire. Conversation against the WTO and about its problems has grown in multitudes. Our collective voices have begun to be heard. ... This is just the beginning."

Let's hope so. ■

Terry LaBan



Land Sharks

The Honduran government is selling off indigenous lands

By Kari Lydersen

CHICAGO—For years, the Honduran government has eyed the country's beautiful coastal land, imagining the foreign money that could be lured in through tourist and residential developments. But laws preventing the sale of indigenous land so far have kept the government from making much profit. The coasts are home to many of the country's indigenous peoples, and have been protected by agrarian reform laws in the Honduran Constitution, which prohibit the sale of indigenous lands and foreign ownership of lands within 25 miles of the coast.

Then in 1998, Hurricane Mitch swept across Honduras, leaving more than 5,000 dead and 2 million displaced—one-third of the country's population. But the devastation gave the Honduran government the perfect excuse to override the constitution and put indigenous lands on the market.

In a middle-of-the-night congressional session on Nov. 30, 1998, with a curfew imposed and the country in chaos, Congress voted to repeal the article that had prevented the sale of coastal lands. They explained that this was necessary to attract the foreign investment needed to rebuild the country.

Indigenous groups were outraged. The Honduran Black Fraternal Organization released a statement noting that the reform would allow privatization of the coastal lands and beaches, including scenic tropical islands, keys and reefs. For tourism projects to move forward, the group reasoned, the indigenous people who have lived there for years would have to be removed.

Even before the hurricane, the vast majority of Hondurans lived in abject poverty. Mitch exacerbated the problem, causing well over a billion dollars in damage. Although \$600 million in foreign aid flowed in after the storm, indigenous and poor people have yet to see much in the way of relief. A report this fall in *NACLA Report on the Americas* documented how high-ranking politicians used relief aid to enrich themselves and their friends. According to the magazine, "One foreign diplomat referred to the rebuilding efforts as a 'feeding trough for public officials.'"

"It's unclear how much money is going to the people and how much is going right into the rulers' pockets," says Vicky Cervantes, a Chicago resident who helped organize a national Pastors for Peace delegation to Honduras. "Many indigenous people say all they've gotten are some clothes or a sack of corn."

more than 200 years. Private mansions in gated, guarded complexes already have been built on their land and construction of hotels is in the works. According to Alexy Lanza, a Chicago-based organizer who visited Honduras last year, illegal development started prior to Mitch, and the hurricane provided the government with an excuse to speed up the process. "If the government doesn't end up getting the repeal, they will keep doing this anyway," Lanza says. "If the indigenous communities are standing in the way of the development they want, they will get rid of them one way or another."

The Honduran government has made overtures to indigenous groups, asking for input on land sales and relocation, but indigenous leaders are unimpressed. Just last summer, the government promised to include the Garifunas and other groups in discussions about land reform, but

then ignored their demands for input on which lands are sold, who profits and what happens to the people who live there.

Indigenous groups say resistance to land reform has played a part in increased repression. Numerous protests have been met with government opposition and threats. Last year, the U.S. Embassy in Honduras denied a visa to indigenous leader Salvador Zuniga, who was planning to meet with non-governmental organizations here. The U.S. government claimed that he lacked sufficient evidence of Honduran community involvement to show he wasn't an illegal immigration risk. Less than a month after being denied the visa, Zuniga was sentenced to four years in prison for slandering Honduran Vice President William Handal, whom he had accused of environmental degradation.

One indigenous rights group, the Coordinated Black Organizations of Honduras, is now planning to sue the



Devastation from Hurricane Mitch gave the Honduran government an excuse to revoke indigenous rights.

For the constitutional repeal to become law, it must pass a second congressional vote. Last summer, the second vote failed, but Congress likely will schedule a new vote. Regardless, the government already has gone ahead with land sales and privatization, gutting a number of peasant and indigenous land protections.

The people protected by these laws include the Garifunas, 150,000 black Hondurans descended from slaves who have lived on the Atlantic coast for

ALEXY LANZA

government, claiming genocide on grounds that the loss of their land would wipe out indigenous culture. "Neoliberalism and powerful economic sectors are condemning our country to death," reads a statement from The Confederation of Autonomous Communities of Honduras, another indigenous group. "It is inconceivable that after the damage from such a brutal phenomenon as Mitch, they are approving laws against nature." ■

Wild Wild West

Citizens demand more protected wilderness

By Geoff Schumacher

LAS VEGAS—The rejuvenated wilderness movement mobilizing across the West can trace its rebirth to a meeting on Memorial Day weekend in 1998 at a ranch near Tucson, Arizona. The "mentoring conference" brought together "old dogs" of the wilderness movement—some of whom were involved in its beginnings in the early '60s—with enthusiastic young guns. From that meeting came an outpouring of energy and a rough strategy for protecting more wild lands.

Since then, coalitions have formed in every Western state to gather information and build support for new and expanded wilderness areas. Leading the charge is Utah, where environmentalists have developed a process being emulated across the West. Dissatisfied with low-ball government efforts to identify lands suitable for protection, citizens have taken over the task of surveying wild areas to determine which ones should be protected.

In Utah, a massive inventory—in which 500 volunteers spent 50,000 hours walking natural areas over two years—identified 9.1 million acres deserving of wilderness protection. The Utah Wilderness Coalition then held a series of public meetings across the state to allow residents to critique its work. In the end, even the Bureau of

Land Management (BLM) agreed with the group's recommendations. The product is a bill in Congress that has 156 co-sponsors.

Despite strong support, the legislation is stranded in a subcommittee chaired by Rep. Jim Hansen (R-Utah). But Tom Price, communications coordinator for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, is as enthusiastic as ever about the prospects of wilderness protection. "A year ago, there was just the Utah bill and a bill for the Arctic," Price says. "Now there are statewide proposals in every state in the West. There has been an unprecedented resurgence of the national wilderness movement. We know a rising tide lifts all boats and passes all bills."

The Wilderness Act, signed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964, now protects 104 million acres—more than half of them in Alaska. Wilderness protection means the lands cannot be

developed, even to the extent of building a road. The Wilderness Society based in Durango, Colorado, estimates there may be as many as 200 million more acres suitable for protection nationwide. Most of those lands are in Alaska and the West.

Activists say the new commitment to wilderness protection has been spurred by a growing concern about urban sprawl, especially in the West, where metropolitan areas like Denver, Phoenix and Las Vegas are spreading across the landscape with abandon. The movement, which realized some of its greatest successes in the '80s, took cover in the early '90s as Newt Gingrich tried unsuccessfully to mount a conservative revolution.

Nevada's fledgling efforts are fueled by its dubious distinction of having the fewest acres of designated wilderness—about 800,000—of any Western state. In the '80s, the BLM identified 5.1 million acres of potential wilderness in Nevada and formally recommended



DAVID BRAUCHLIN/NEWSMAKERS

Thank You, Now Leave: In the largest demonstration since the 1989 Velvet Revolution, 50,000 people gathered in Prague's Wenceslas Square on Dec. 3. The event was provoked by a manifesto entitled "Thank You, Now Leave," written by the same six student leaders who spearheaded the Velvet Revolution and released on its 10th anniversary.

Jingling keys and ringing bells, a symbolic gesture of death in Czech culture, the protesters demanded the resignations of Prime Minister Milos Zeman and parliamentary speaker Vaclav Klaus, who they blame for the country's deepening recession and rampant political corruption (see "Czech Scams," April 11, 1999).

More than 250,000 Czechs have signed the manifesto—in a country of only 10 million—including President Vaclav Havel, whose role in the Czech government is largely ceremonial. Demonstrations were also held in 20 other Czech cities.

Kristin Kolb

protection for about 2 million. But activists estimate there are at least 9 million acres of potential BLM wilderness in the Silver State, and as many as 15 million acres under the jurisdiction of all federal agencies. Their surveying project—expected to take three years—is just getting underway. Similar projects are at various stages of completion in Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming.

The rejuvenated wilderness advocates are energetic and optimistic, but they have not yet chalked up a solid victory. The so-called wise use movement remains strong in the rural West, and mining, logging and ranching interests still carry substantial clout. The "Sagebrush Rebellion"—a movement to privatize public lands—is alive and well in places like northeastern Nevada, where Forest Service employees literally

fear for their safety amid disputes over federal land management. A group of Nevada elected officials traveled to Washington recently to support legislation requiring the BLM to sell more of its property. And getting a big wilderness bill passed through the Republican-controlled Congress is unlikely until there's a change in leadership.

Wilderness advocates say when that happens, they will be ready, armed with rock-solid evidence and the public's blessing. "We need to build a strong base of support, so that when the political climate changes again, we'll be able to add acres to the wilderness system," Watson says. "There is a growing awareness of sprawl and the loss of open space

New Union Docs

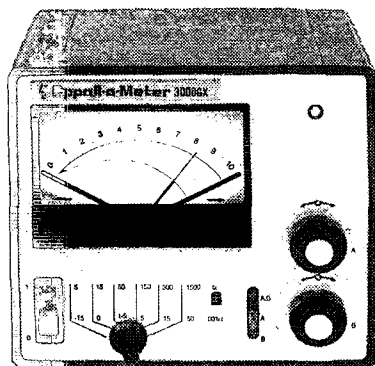
Resident physicians are employees, not students, and entitled to the right to unionize and determine their wages and hours, the National Labor Relations Board ruled on Nov. 29.

The ruling affects more than 90,000 interns, residents and fellows employed at private hospitals, who work infamously long hours—often more than 80 a week. "This is a great victory for resident physicians and their patients," says Dr. Ladi Haroona, president of the Committee of Interns and Residents, the affiliate of the Service Employees International Union that brought the case. "Resident physicians in private hospitals will now have the right to a voice in their working conditions. This means they can actively advocate the highest quality patient care."

Kristin Kolb

in urban areas. People are starting to understand the value of those open spaces that are left, whether they are in their backyards or not."

Price agrees that the key to wilderness protection lies in support from urban dwellers. "As the West continues to grow and sprawl eats away our open space," he says, "people are going to demand that we save what's left." ■



Appall-o-Meter

By David Futrelle

Loose Ships 8.1

Canada was just trying to make a few extra bucks by selling for scrap two old navy destroyers, the *Kootenay* and the *Restigouche*, to a man from Florida. But they may inadvertently have transformed Richard Crawford into a military power: The Canadian navy somehow forgot to remove a 10-foot tall, eight-barreled anti-submarine launcher from one of the ships. So far, the destroyers remain docked at a base in British Columbia; Crawford refuses to allow the navy on board to make sure they haven't left anything else behind. "It was not clear exactly what Crawford intended to do with the destroyers," Reuters reports. "But [a Defense Department] official said the vessels would not be allowed to leave Canadian waters before any sensitive equipment was removed or rendered inoperational."

Powder Keg 7.2

Jesse Helms, who always seems to have more than his share of things to worry about, has uncovered a new threat to Western Civilization: Senators who like pancake makeup better than pancake breakfasts. "There are some senators who wear makeup most of the day because they are on television," *U.S. News and World Report* quoted the fusty reactionary. "It is just ridiculous." Apparently, Helms is nostalgic for his early years in the Senate, when politicians powdered their wigs instead of their faces.

Judgment Day 7.6

Life for heroin addicts is not exactly a bed of poppies. But it's just gotten a little bit tougher: In a recent speech in Brisbane, Australia, TV's Judge Judy dismissed needle-exchange programs designed to prevent the spread of AIDS

among intravenous drug users as the brainchild of "liberal morons." Apparently she has her own notions of how needle exchanges should work. "Give them all dirty needles and let them die," she exclaimed to cheers from the audience, according to Australia's AAP General News. Ironically, she

was in Australia promoting her book *Beauty Fades, Dumb is Forever*.

Death Bad, Residents Say 6.2

Headline from the front page of the *Chicago Tribune* metro section on Nov. 30: "Triple Slaying Angers Residents." You see, they were going for four.



TERRY LABAN

Hunting for Justice

American Indian treaty rights are under attack

By Jeff Shaw

OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON—Since time immemorial, hunters from Northwest tribes have supplied their families and tribal elders with deer and elk meat. Since June, their right to do so has been in jeopardy.

Last summer, a decision by the state Supreme Court struck a fierce blow against treaty hunting rights reserved for Indian nations. A few weeks later, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife restricted Northwest tribes' elk hunting areas, shrinking them from the entire state of Washington to lands only slightly larger than the reservations themselves. These developments fly in the face of treaties signed by the region's tribes in the 19th century, which reserved the right to hunt on all "open and unclaimed land" in what was then the Washington Territory.

The state of Washington is concerned that tribal hunters will deplete the region's deer and elk herds—though, as tribal leaders point out, Department of Fish and Wildlife data show tribal hunting was responsible for less than 3 percent of the 1998 harvest. As Suquamish Tribal Council member Georgia George-Rye points out, poaching is the real threat to deer and elk herds.

On many impoverished reservations, tribal members rely on deer and elk meat to feed their families. While no serious commercial industry will be affected by the new decisions, the impact on the tribal food supply could be significant.

Adding to the frustration of Northwest tribes is Washington's furious rate of growth. Many traditional hunting grounds have been gobbled up by strip-malls and housing developments. This is a small inconvenience for the recreational hunter, but a great affront to the tribes. "We're not just out there sport hunting," says Wayne George, a Suquamish Tribal Council member. "We're out there getting meat for our families and for the tribal elders."

Besides providing food, elk meat holds strong cultural and ceremonial significance for Northwest tribes. It is used in pow-wows, weddings, births,



Poaching—not tribal hunting—is the real threat to elk herds.

naming ceremonies—nearly every group setting. "It shows up in a lot of the old stories. At any gathering—it could be small, or it could be a large gathering like a potlatch—elk is expected to be served to the group in some form," says Peg Deam, a Suquamish cultural development specialist.

Indian nations and the state are supposed to consult each other on the scientific rationale for any changes in hunting regulations. The Department of Fish and Wildlife's new hunting boundaries, though, were drawn up without any Indian input whatsoever. "They just came out and said, 'This is where you're going to hunt, and if you hunt outside these boundaries, we're going to arrest your members,'" George says. "We used to work hand in hand on this stuff, and all of a sudden we're not. That's not the way it's supposed to be."

Some hunters have continued to travel to their traditional grounds, and a few have been arrested. Recently, tribal leaders met to determine how to address the new restrictions. One possibility is a federal lawsuit. A similar case, the 1974 *Boldt* decision on fishing rights, determined that Washington tribes were entitled to half of the fish and shellfish available for harvest—a landmark defense of an embattled treaty right. "It's not like we're asking for the whole world," George says. "We're just asking for the areas back that we hunted before." ■

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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Witness to a Crime

By Jim Veverka

Until recently, Dr. Anthony Kirkpatrick worked as a physician at the Veterans Administration medical center in Tampa, Florida, where he directed the hospital's chronic pain program. There, he was praised by his supervisors for devoting "considerable energies to the human rights field, where he has an international reputation for defending victims of government policies." But when those considerable energies expose the State Department's role in concealing the disastrous impact of the U.S. embargo on Cuba—well, that's a different story.

In 1993, Kirkpatrick went to Cuba to do research. "I wanted to see how a health care system would operate in a Communist country," he says.

In Cuba, Kirkpatrick was surprised to witness an epidemic of neurological disease caused by a food shortage. More than 50,000 Cubans were experiencing symptoms ranging from blindness and deafness to burning sensations in their hands and feet and loss of bowel and bladder control. Doctors, lacking sensation in their hands, were unable to perform surgery. Perhaps most troubling was the fact that no one knew precisely why all of this was happening.

Upon returning to the United States, Kirkpatrick, who also is an assistant professor of anesthesiology at the University of South Florida, began to analyze the health crisis and concluded that its primary cause was the U.S. embargo.

With the help of his supervisor, Dr. Robert Bedford, Kirkpatrick published his findings in the Nov. 30, 1996, issue of *The Lancet*, a British medical journal. He wrote that the U.S. embargo and "the resultant lack of food and medicine to Cuba contributed to the worst epidemic of neurological disease this century."

This disease, Kirkpatrick says, is identical to the syndrome found among American GIs who faced starvation in Japanese POW camps during World War II. Describing the syndrome as a "zone" that one passes through—"the twilight between dying and living"—Kirkpatrick explains that a vitamin deficiency

produces progressively more severe neurological symptoms, ranging from anxiety and nervousness to the devastating symptoms he saw in Cuba.

"I thought that would be enough—to publish that there was a crime against humanity being perpetrated by the United States, my own country, against people 90 miles away," he says.

It wasn't. In May 1997, the State Department released a press statement disputing Kirkpatrick's claims and blaming the crisis on the Castro government's

at the VA and consistently had received high ratings for his research on the Cuban embargo. His 1998 evaluation pointed out: "Dr. Kirkpatrick's medical publications regarding the public health situation in Cuba have received favorable notice in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and have served as the foundation for legislative action designed to relieve the U.S. embargo against Cuba."

After examining Kirkpatrick's case, the Government Accountability Project (GAP), a public interest law firm that assists whistleblowers, filed suit under the Whistleblower Protection Act with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel. GAP legal director Tom Devine describes Kirkpatrick's suit as a test case to see if



Dr. Anthony Kirkpatrick (center) meets with doctors and nurses at the Central Pediatrics Hospital in Havana.

"continued adherence to a discredited communist economic model."

"I was reading this and I said to myself, 'My God, they just flat lied,'" Kirkpatrick says. He contacted the State Department, requesting that they verify their information or retract their press statement, but to no avail.

Then, in April 1998, while writing a report challenging the State Department, requested by then Rep. Esteban Torres (D-Calif.), Kirkpatrick stopped by Bedford's office to discuss the article. Brushing aside Kirkpatrick's research as "extracurricular," Bedford informed him that the VA would not be renewing his contract.

Kirkpatrick says his dismissal came as a "huge, huge surprise." He had tenure

the government's own whistle-blowing mechanism can confront "big lies about foreign policy outrages." In addition to challenging Kirkpatrick's termination from the Tampa VA hospital, Devine says, GAP is pursuing "a whistle-blowing disclosure that the State Department misstated the public health consequences of the Cuban medical embargo."

Meanwhile, Kirkpatrick continues to speak out about the harm the embargo inflicts on the Cuban people. "I don't want the American public to think I've been duped. I had no particular political persuasion—other than a strict adherence to scientifically verifiable data," he says. "You're a witness to a crime. You can walk away, or you can do something about it." ■

NORTHERN IRELAND

A BITTER PILL

BY CARL BROMLEY

Eighteen long months of unionist filibustering, time enough for the euphoria that followed ratification of the April 1998 Good Friday accords to dissolve, are apparently over. Former Sen. George Mitchell's review of the accords—designed to reanimate a peace process stalled over IRA weapons decommissioning—has created a shaky consensus among the Sinn Fein and Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) leadership.

The power-sharing executive of Irish nationalist and pro-British unionists is in place, and the Northern Ireland Assembly is in session. The British Parliament has formally transferred power after 27 years of direct rule, and the Irish Republic has dropped the articles from its constitution that laid territorial claim to the six Northern Irish counties. In their wake are cross-border policy bodies and a North-South Council of Ministers.

Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams, a man of great political acumen who chooses his words carefully, claimed it was "probably the most important week since the partition of Ireland."

But even as the pundits were talking of new days and new dawns, UUP leader David Trimble slipped a caveat into the proceedings: a post-dated letter of resignation if the IRA does not begin arms decommissioning by February. This was quite out of keeping with what was agreed to during the Mitchell review. But UUP insiders claim Trimble wouldn't have been able to sell the review to the party's ruling council without it.

Nevertheless, the IRA has accused Trimble of moving the goalposts again. As one commentator said, "The peace process rarely meets and over-

comes one set of obstacles than another lot appears immediately and the tedious business begins all over again."

Since the June 1998 Assembly elections, in which Sinn Fein won a sizable vote entitling them to executive seats, Trimble has been using his bully pulpit of first minister-designate to insist on prior decommissioning of IRA weapons before Sinn Fein takes office, despite there being no language like this in the accords. Trimble's threat of resignation, reveals how little he has cultivated his party's own base. Many of them are still deeply hostile to the idea of power-sharing with the IRA's political associates, despite the much vaunted spit and shine Trimble has given the UUP. Trimble has strived

to convince them throughout that the formation of the executive and North-South ministerial bodies would be on unionist terms.

Over the past few months, Britain has mounted a charm offensive on unionism. Mo Mowlam, the popular British secretary of state, was replaced by the unionist-friendly Peter Mandelson, and the hated (by Catholics anyway) Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) was awarded the George Cross for "bravery."

Whatever fear unionists have with the modest RUC reforms proposed by the Patten Commission of Policing or the early release of IRA prisoners, the accords are substantially more unionist than nationalist. Enshrined is an assurance that unionism has fought and died for since the inception of the six-county statelet: The Republic has dropped its territorial claim (which much of Ireland's elite regarded as an albatross anyway) and there is cross-party agreement that Ireland will not unite until a majority consent to it. This is a far bitterer pill, for nationalists, than any unionist has had to swallow.

When Adams claims that this is a step toward Irish unity, dissident Republicans accuse him of preaching wine but drinking water. It's difficult to disagree with critics who claim that the new cross-border bodies are insignificant. It's hard to imagine

that cross-border bodies dealing with the Irish language, inland waterways, food safety, farming, trade and development facilitate Irish unity. Don't most countries with shared borders have mutual understandings like this?

The complex institutions of the Good Friday accord are designed to enforce consensus.

But all that dissident Republicans offer is the old route the IRA took for three decades: a war that brought a stalemate but nothing more. Could a few dozen malcontents better that?

Adams insists that with the peace accord "nationalists and republicans got their hands on the levers of power" for the first time. Putting aside the fact that Britain still has jurisdiction in the six counties, Ireland is still partitioned and, as Adams concedes, "there is still huge social, political and economic injustice," the question confronting Sinn Fein leadership—one foot in Belfast and under the influence of an Irish-American lobby dominated by big business—is what

Continued on page 12

A LASTING PEACE?

A NEW BEGINNING

BY KELLY CANDAELE

On a Los Angeles radio talk show in November, John Hume, Nobel Peace Prize winner and leader of the Northern Irish Social Democratic and Labour Party, refused to countenance any negativity. When the host wanted to pursue potential difficulties that may arise out of the deal to set up a new government, Hume begged off and stuck to his "we will build a new Northern Ireland" script. There is good reason to be hopeful.

The new agreement in Northern Ireland establishes a novel form of government. Northern Ireland could become a "bi-national" state, whereby citizens who occupy the same territory but identify with divergent political aspirations can assert political, economic and cultural power within a framework of equality. The finely structured deal is partly designed to reconcile the minority Catholic community to a Northern Irish government that historically has been a bastion of unionism.

Under the new framework, all major decisions will take place by a process of "parallel consent," whereby majorities in the assembly from each political community must reach agreement before "key decisions" become law. Gone is the ability of the unionist community to unilaterally dominate the political process. Conversely, if nationalists later become the majority, the same rules would protect a unionist minority.

A North-South Ministerial Council will bring the Republic of Ireland into a more direct political relationship with Northern Ireland on cross-border issues, a key demand of Northern Irish nationalists. Several tough issues remain, including the transformation of the largely Protestant police force, the removal of British troops and cultural questions such as parity of the Irish language. Sinn Fein supporters will be looking for significant changes on the ground once the honeymoon is over.

Political persistence and some blind luck have played a role in the success of the talks. But long-term dynamics have been more important. In the late '80s, leaders within Sinn Fein and the IRA realized that a military victory was not possible. Adams and Hume joined in talks that laid the intellectual and political foundations for a way forward. It took a change in the British government, international pressure and an evolution of the unionist community to set the stage.

There has been a slow but evolving relative increase in the population and political strength of the Catholic/nationalist community. Unionist David Trimble, who leads a party that has been divided and demoralized since the 1985 Anglo-Irish



Agreement that was negotiated "over their heads" by Britain and the Irish Republic, understands the demographic trajectory. Trimble pushed his party into the 1997 peace talks by pointing to the threat of what would be negotiated "for them" if

Continued on page 12

BROMLEY

Continued from page 10

sort of social vision do they have of the future?

The complex institutions of Good Friday are centripetal in essence, designed, along with the trappings of office, to enforce consensus. How does a "radical republican labor party" (Adams description of Sinn Fein) reconcile itself with this? How does its radicalism dovetail with its ambitions to erode the nationalist Social Democratic Labour Party's middle-class voting base and its wish to lower the North's corporate tax levels?

We may rejoice that ordinary politics have invaded Northern Ireland and celebrate that Sinn Fein now controls the Health and Education ministry, a sign perhaps of how far the country has traveled from the political squalor of yesteryear. Will Sinn Fein fight hospital closures and scrap a secondary education system that consigns many to the dole? Or will the consensus-making institutions of Good Friday prevent that?

The prospect of a durable peace settlement, however, is a challenge to the Irish left, which has in recent times either buried its head in the sand or ridden the coat tails of republicanism. Rather than relying entirely on Sinn Fein, the left must show a more independent character and build a social movement that will create a radical social agenda beyond the trappings of consensus. ■

Carl Bromley, who wrote about Ulster loyalists in the Sept. 19 issue, also contributes to Counterpunch and The Nation.



CANDAELE

Continued from page 11

they stayed out. The Good Friday Agreement restores some executive power to unionism in the meantime as local power has become more dispersed.

Yes, the Republic of Ireland has dropped its territorial claim to the six counties of Northern Ireland. But it was not just the "elites" who agreed to the compromise. The Good Friday agreement, the details of which were distributed widely north and south before the May 1998 referendum, was endorsed by vast majorities of nationalists on both sides of the border. It

"Consensus" is only a dirty word when extracted from the context of Northern Ireland's carnage.

received more than 90 percent of the nationalist vote in Northern Ireland. "Consensus" is only a dirty word when extracted from the context of Northern Ireland's carnage over the past 30 years, where more than 3,000 lives have been lost. Sinn Fein and the IRA have had to step back from the rather platonic ideal of a "radical republic" and pursue the more long-term slog through political institutions. If you ask the people of Omagh, where a bomb exploded by the Real IRA, a splinter group from the provisionals, killed 29 people in August 1998, they will bitterly explain to you that the tragedy is that the Real IRA was not part of that awful "consensus."

There are dangers ahead. Many paramilitary groups have not reconciled themselves to the new reality. The whole structure may indeed come tumbling down again in February. But the deeper historical, political and economic logic points in another direction. It points to a new beginning as Northern Ireland reinvents itself. ■

Kelly Candaele has written about Northern Ireland for several national publications. He lives in Los Angeles.

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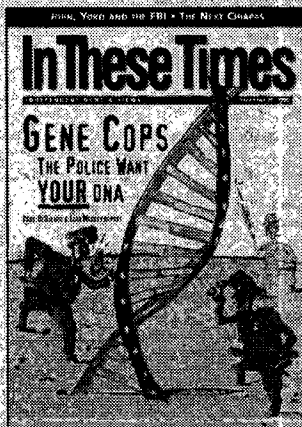
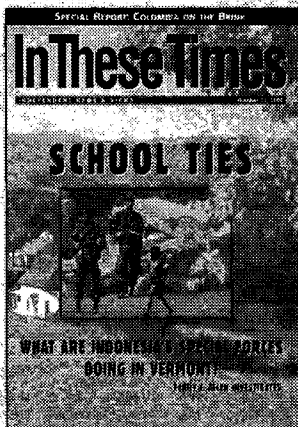
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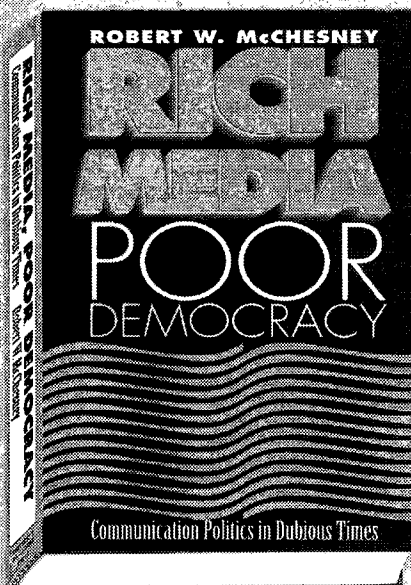
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SEATTLE

The "Battle in Seattle," pitting more than 35,000 protesters of staggeringly diverse backgrounds against the World Trade Organization, ended in a striking victory for a popular movement that emerged with a stronger, more focused voice and a broad, sympathetic world audience.

The victory went beyond blocking the opening meeting of trade ministers from 135 countries and disrupting other WTO functions. The protests intensified the already deep-seated internal conflicts among different blocs of countries, leading to a dramatic failure by the WTO to launch a new round of trade talks. The protests also strengthened the bonds of many coalition partners and gave a dramatic boost to a movement that has been steadily growing and gaining clout.

After Seattle it will be difficult for any politician to talk about global economics without addressing links to labor rights, human rights, food supplies and the protection of both consumers and the environment. After Seattle it also will be critical that the protesters maintain their broad coalition, link up more with movements in developing countries, and define with greater clarity what they are for as well as what they are against.

It was easy for outsiders to be perplexed by the variety of issues raised by protesters. There were people costumed as sea turtles, dolphins and ears of genetically modified corn marching alongside Steelworkers, Teamsters and longshore workers. There were religious activists demanding cancellation of poor countries' debt and defenders of human rights in Burma and China. There were campus crusaders against sweatshops and child labor, eco-defenders of old forests and small farmers from around the world. There were calls for "vegan power" and flags invoking the American

Revolution—"Don't trade on me." While some marched or sat down in the streets with arms locked, others danced or acted out street theater dramas. At times, the streams of protest converged: A forest ranger in uniform carried a sign proclaiming, "Unfair Trade Destroys American Jobs."

It was a tribute to the WTO that it managed to bring them all together, giving them coherence and a common enemy. But the protest was not targeted simply at the WTO. With great regularity, whatever their own primary issue, protesters made it clear that their ultimate targets were corporate power and the tyranny of the market, which threaten democracy, community, nature and humanity. They were not against trade, but they wanted the global market to be governed by values beyond profit maximization. "The system turns everything into a commodity, a rain forest in Brazil, a library in Philadelphia, a hospital in Alberta," AFSCME president Gerry McEntee told the big labor rally. "We have to name that system: It is corporate capitalism."

Coming together from fights to protect forests, save jobs, block bad trade deals, defend human and worker rights, keep food safe, end sweatshops and preserve a public sphere, the new movement has become a more pointed international popular fight against corporate globalization and unregulated markets dominated solely by the needs of rootless transnational capital. At the turn of the last century, there was another movement of populists, progressives and socialists against laissez-faire capitalism and robber barons. "No one thought they had a chance," Minnesota Sen. Paul Wellstone reminded a labor audience in Seattle. "Their point was to civilize the national economy. We are here—a broad coalition—to civilize the global economy."

Discontent with the WTO and the new global economy also filled the hallways of delegates' hotels and the conference center. Many developing countries say they have gained little from the first five years of the WTO, and there were deep divisions over how far to push total commodification in agriculture, services and other areas. In the end, according to Mark Ritchie of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, the talks collapsed because of many smaller countries' frustrations with the closed, undemocratic internal

That attitude reflects the typical contempt for popular views at the WTO and among governmental trade officials. The protests drew attention to normally obscure, secretive deliberations. They were potent not only because of the size and militancy of the crowds, but because officials know that there is overwhelming public support for the protesters' fundamental positions. Just before the talks opened, the University of Maryland Program on International Policy Attitudes released a survey that showed

okay, so we're
in the streets



now what?

procedures—echoing the protests in the streets, which may have reinforced their courage to dissent. This year, many developing countries threatened to reject any proposal because of this lack of “transparency,” and both U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and WTO director general Michael Moore admitted that the procedures had failed and need to be reformed.

While labor leaders and rank-and-file workers from developing countries joined the big labor rights rallies, with calls for international enforcement of labor rights and even a global minimum wage, their governmental representatives at the WTO were strongly resisting even the weak American and European proposals for a discussion and research group on the relationship between labor rights and trade.

Although President Clinton's suggestion in a Seattle newspaper interview that ultimately labor rights should be enforceable with trade sanctions provided an excuse for delegates from developing countries like Egypt and Pakistan to attack any discussion of labor rights, there had been only modest progress in hastily assembled negotiations. The AFL-CIO was disappointed but would not have wanted a working party that was prohibited from talking about enforcement. The Clinton administration's rhetorical enthusiasm about labor rights is merely an attempt to preserve the legitimacy of the tarnished WTO and “free trade.” But the less progress the WTO makes on labor rights, the more doubts union leaders have about reforming the institution. If the WTO can't deliver, Steelworkers President George Becker told the big labor rally, “We should start a movement to get the hell out of the WTO.”

Victor Thorpe, the outgoing president of the International Chemical, Energy and Mine Workers was even more skeptical. “It's not enough to get a seat at the table,” he argued. “My biggest fear is that organized labor would get a seat at the table, bleating our protest and shutting these people [occupying the streets] out. It would marginalize us. It's not enough to say, ‘Let the process roll on with a codicil on labor and the environment.’ We need a WTO that actually regulates multinational corporations.”

Some trade ministers blamed the meeting's failure on Clinton, who repeatedly has pushed global trade deals that offer no protection for labor rights and the environment, succumbing to popular pressure with an eye toward next fall's election.

**Steelworkers
dump a Huff
bicycle made
with Asian
steel into
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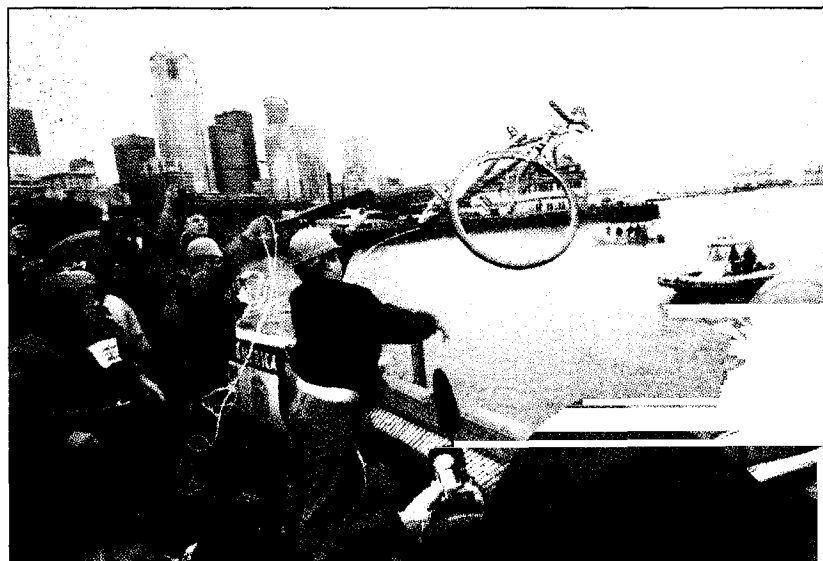
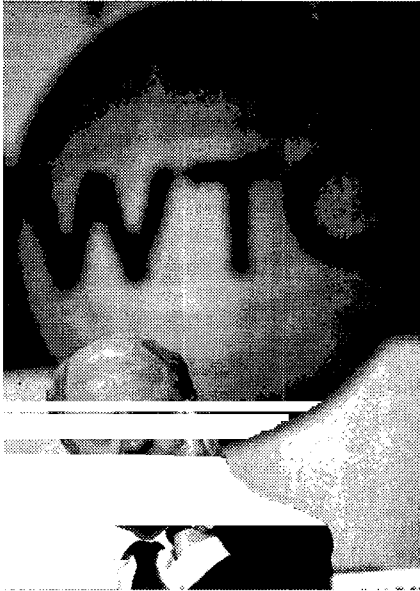


PHOTO: JOHN G. WABANGLO/AP. FLYER: COURTESY OF MARC HERBST

well-dressed, middle-aged nurse, was nonplused. "I think it's great," she said. "I really support what they're striving for. I just hope they keep it peaceful."

On opening day, the action started with the groups trained in civil disobedience gathering in a park near the Pike Place Market before marching into downtown behind a banner carried



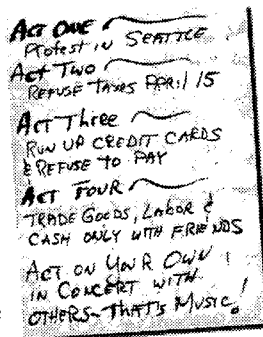
WTO director general Michael Moore

by Steelworkers attacking financier Charles Hurwitz for busting unions and destroying old growth forests. Some protesters, like forest advocate Karen Coulter, were seasoned activists. "The WTO is the latest escalation in the whole system of global corporate rule," she said as the cold morning rain fell. "We need to stop that escalation and then tackle all the other institutions of corporate rule, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank."

Others were relative political novices, like Wayne Flower, 33, who works for a Web site and runs his own cleaning business. "This is what America is all about," he said as he prepared to sit down in the street. "Everything we hold dear, like the eight-hour work day, child labor laws, insurance, sick pay, maternity leave—people had to stand up for that. Since the '80s, Americans have been bred to be complacent, and that's why [our leaders] get away with all this stuff. It's time to wake up and wake everyone else up."

Within an hour, the protesters managed to lock down most of the approaches to the Paramount Theater, where the opening session was scheduled. Although police began using tear gas and pepper spray, prodding people with nightsticks and drawing in armored cars and horses to disperse the crowds, the blockers remained disciplined, chanting, "no violence, peaceful protest." Later in the day, and throughout the following days, police became more abusive, even attacking Seattle residents in their own neighborhoods.

There were union members among the early morning sit-in crowd, but the labor movement had opted for a big stadium rally and march downtown. Ultimately, the labor march and assembly, with Machinists and public workers, Steelworkers and computer temps, gave the other protests credibility, just as they in turn gave the labor rally a sharper edge. The rhetoric at the big labor protest was far more anti-corporate and internationalist than it would have been a few years back. It was a rally not just for American union members whose jobs are threatened by global capital mobility, speakers insisted, but for workers everywhere and for solidarity across borders and social movements.



Yet as union strategists look to the future after Seattle, "the most urgent work is building a stronger labor-Third World progressive alliance," says Thea Lee, an AFL-CIO international economist. "We've done a lot of work making connection with labor unions in developing countries, but it's clear we need to continue that work and move beyond it and build trust with developing country governments and community leaders and environmental and religious leaders before we can make progress."

Partly that means more labor support for developing country critiques of WTO intellectual property protections, especially involving essential medicines, and more debt relief, especially when tied to core labor rights and progressive social policies. For example, Lee says, unions may support easier access to U.S. markets for developing countries that take steps, with technical and financial assistance from the United States, to improve labor rights. It would be the opposite of NAFTA, which gave Mexico—with its neoliberal economic policies and a bad labor record—increased market access.

Labor strategists are starting to recognize that they must support alternatives to the dominant development strategy: suppress labor, attract foreign capital, export heavily. "We need to put meaty political flesh on the argument that respect for core labor rights and a robust democracy are good development policies," argues AFL-CIO public policy director David Smith.

Academic studies do show that on average lower levels of income inequality are linked to faster economic growth. Harvard economist Dani Rodrik has shown that workers earn more in democratic regimes at any particular level of economic development. Also, if the United States is to be credible as an advocate for international labor rights, there's a desperate need for a massive campaign for labor rights at home, including ratification of more International Labor Organization standards.

Building on the momentum from Seattle, critics of corporate globalization are gearing up for a major fight next year on China's accession to the WTO. But it is unclear how to pressure China in any meaningful way, now that Clinton has given China the green light. Clinton's trade deal with China, the most critical of the bilateral deals paving the way for membership, does not need congressional approval. "China will be in the WTO," Lee says. "The only question is how the United States engages with China once it's in the WTO and whether it's granted a temporary or permanent normal trading relationship."

The challenge for all of the groups in Seattle, especially unions and environmentalists, is how to build on their success. "There is such a thing as more of the same," suggests Ralph Nader. "There was a real cutting edge to this demonstration." Unlike participants in many big demonstrations, the Seattle protesters—including the big labor contingent and the students—are likely to talk with people and take action back home. Nader also suggests that WTO critics push initiatives that provoke challenges under the WTO rules, heightening the sense of outrage over the limits they impose.

The Seattle demonstrations have already boosted turnout at protests around the country on related issues from sweatshops to genetically modified foods, and the ongoing campaigns on globalization issues are likely to be the major

vehicles for this new energy. The AFL-CIO and individual unions, as well as groups like Public Citizen and Global Exchange, also plan to intensify pressure on political candidates about WTO, trade and global economic issues.

The dominant argument is that "there is no alternative" to the American model of cowboy capitalism and wide-open markets. But if that's true, key questions need to be asked: What is it about the way the world works that restricts the ability of communities or nations to create alternatives? What needs to be changed to give people more choices? Obviously, changing the WTO is only one part of that solu-

tion, and among critics there is an often fruitless debate about whether it can be reformed or whether new institutions must start from scratch. What's needed instead is a debate about how to push simultaneously for what is achievable in the near term and what is needed in the long run, taking victories where they can be won without abandoning the more ambitious goals. The clearer the movement that coalesced in Seattle can become about those common, long-range goals, the better chance it will have to go beyond stopping the WTO and providing the much needed alternative to corporate globalization. ■

MAKING HISTORY

BY DAVID BACON
SEATTLE

Those who marched or stood or sat in the streets of Seattle made history, and they knew it. And like the great marches against the Vietnam War, or the first sit-ins in the South in the late '50s, it wasn't always easy to see just what history was being made, especially for those closest to the events of the time. Tear gas, rubber bullets and police sweeps, the object of incessant media coverage, are the outward signs of impending change—that the guardians of the social order have grown afraid. And there's always a little history in that.

Poeina, a young woman sitting in the intersection at the corner of Seventh and Stewart, waiting nervously for the cops to cuff her and take her away in her first arrest, knew the basic achievement she and her friends had already won: "I know we got people to listen, and that we changed their minds." It was a statement of hope, like the chant that rose Nov. 30 from streets filled with thousands of demonstrators as the police moved in: "The whole world is watching!"

The Seattle protests put trade on the public agenda, making WTO a universally recognized set of initials in a matter of hours. But the greatest impact of Seattle will be on the people who were there. A certain understanding of the world was forged in the streets here—a realization based, to begin with, on who was there. Environmentalists came protesting the impending destruction of laws protecting clean air and water. Animal rights activists came to protect sea turtles. Trade unionists came fighting for jobs and protesting child labor. Fair trade campaigners arrived ready to debate corporate domination of the process by which trade rules are decided.

Environmental activists in their twenties came with the tactics from the battles in the forests of Northern California and the Pacific Northwest. They carried giant puppets, dressed themselves in costumes rather than carrying signs, and laid

down in busy intersections at the height of morning rush hour. In groups of 20 and 30, they chained their arms together, slipping metal sleeves over hands and chains to make it hard for the police to cut them apart. Two years ago, this tactic was answered by Humboldt County sheriffs, who



JOHN G. MABANGLO/AFR



DAVID BACON

swabbed pepper spray directly into the eyes of protesters at Pacific Lumber Company. Even for veterans of civil disobedience, the chains are a tactic that demands determination and commitment to face down the fear of violent response.

Later the same day, tens of thousands of

union members marched into downtown to join the protest. Having shut down all the ports along the Pacific Coast from Alaska to San Diego, union members chanted and waved picket signs as they filled the streets as far as the eye could see. Each union's members marched together, each with its own color jacket or T-shirt, each carrying banners and hundreds of signs printed for the occasion. Many of the morning's young protesters were visibly impressed by the strength of their numbers and organization.

In the midst of the tear gas, it was not hard to see that this culture of protest is starting to spread, whether through union jackets on protesters in the redwood forests or giant puppets on union picket lines in Oakland. But underneath is the germ of an idea, a linkage. For unionists, the depredations of a global trading system have pitted workers in many countries against each other in a race to the bottom in wages and worker rights. Environmental activists see a system that values profit-making over laws protecting health and the environment. Rather than creating an atomized assembly—each group pursuing its own interests in isolation—protesters

came ready to see what they had in common.

Annie Decker, an organizer and observer at an intersection filled with sitting bodies, called her own realization liberating. “We don’t have to just express an opinion on one issue,” she said. “Trade and the power of corporations are affecting us in so many areas that we can all make connections, and see the common element behind the problems we share.”

A summit of the powerful was overshadowed by a street protest. This is an indictment, not of a particular company, or even a single country, but of a whole economic order that is uniting its enemies in opposition to it. ■

ANARCHY IN THE USA

BY DAVID GRAEBER

Anarchists often complain they only make the news when they break something. This article is no exception.

It might come as a surprise to those reading the mainstream press, but at least 2,000 anarchists actually participated in the Seattle protests, by some counts as many as 5,000—and the overwhelming majority did not smash anything. There were anarchists in the alternative media network, creating Web sites and helping run the micropower radio station; anarchist medical teams; anarchists distributing free food and providing legal support for those arrested. Most of all, they were involved in nonviolent direct action, occupying streets, building barricades and blockading delegates. The vast majority were anarcho-syndicalists or libertarian socialists of one sort or another. For instance, there were some 200 marching under the Industrial Workers of the World banner in the labor march; they were especially proud of having convinced many of the AFL-CIO contingent to ignore their marshals’

planned route, which veered off from the hotel where the confrontation was actually taking place.

There also were anywhere between 50 to 100 of what other anarchists called the “black bloc,” who came with masks and crowbars, intending to make direct attacks against the property of multinationals. Newspaper reports notwithstanding, they were not in fact a band of primitivists from Eugene, Oregon, followers of a local guru named John Zerzan. Actually, the group was extremely heterogeneous, including some Zerzanites as well as individualists, eco-anarchists and radicals of any number of other stripes—some not even anarchists—who had decided a strict policy of nonviolence was inappropriate. If they had anything in common, it was that they tended to be young and most had some involvement with local ecological movements, increasingly radicalized in recent years as police have responded to nonviolent, anti-logging lockdowns with pepper spray and escalating levels of brutality.

A word of background. Anarchism is not, in fact, the advocacy of violence and disorder. It is a social movement with deep roots in American history, founded above all on an opposition to all structures of systematic coercion and a vision of a society based on principles of voluntary association, mutual aid and autonomous, self-governing communities. “An-archy” is not a reference to chaos; it’s Greek for “without rulers.” The famous A-in-an-O symbol, familiar from T-shirts and brick walls, actually refers to a phrase from French philosopher Henri Proudhon, “Anarchy is Order; Government is Civil War”—i.e., the only genuine order is that not imposed by men with guns. As history repeatedly has shown, nothing is so guaranteed to provoke a violent response on the part of the “forces of order” than someone telling them they don’t have the right to act violently. From as early as the 1870s, anarchists were demonized as bomb-throwing fanatics and assassins who should expect no mercy; this, of course, had the unfortunate effect of ensuring that most anyone who hit out randomly against The Man, whether by trashing their high



MIKE NELSON/APF

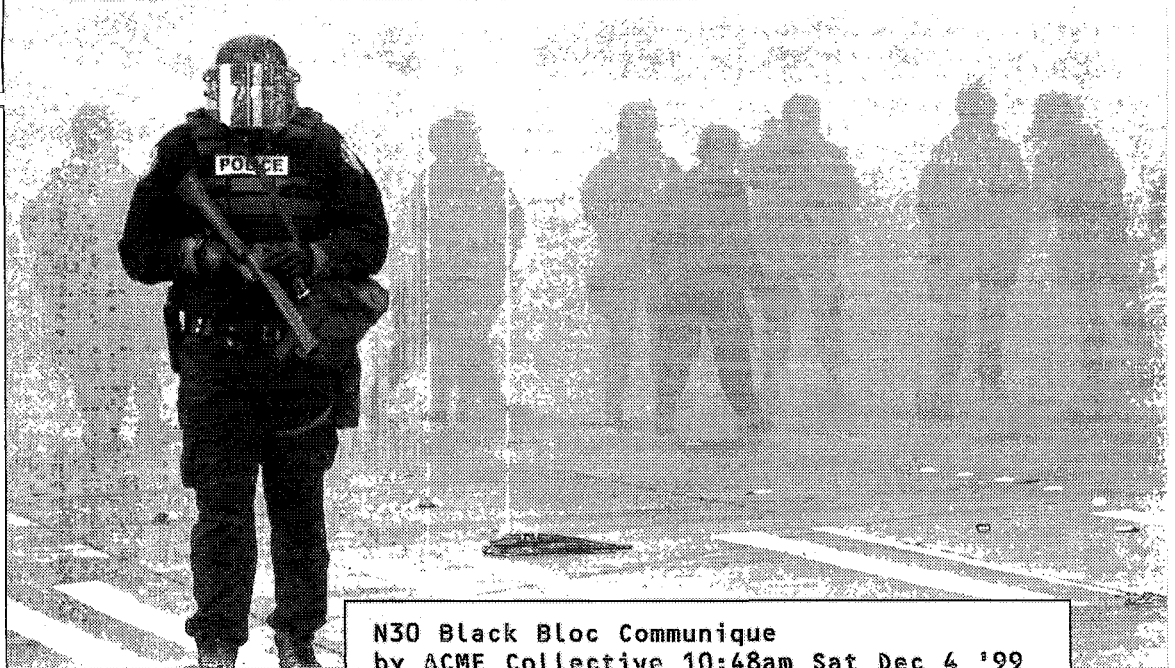
school or unabombing, would also claim to be an "anarchist."

What we see in Seattle then is the revival of a very old pattern: "We respect the protesters," declare the authorities, "except for a handful of anarchists"—and then order police to open up on all of them with tear gas, pepper spray, concussion grenades, truncheons and rubber bullets.

Many anarchists were ambivalent about the black bloc's actions, but all were careful to add that this was anything but random violence. Their targets—Nike, Starbucks, The Gap and the (suggestively named) Planet Hollywood—were carefully selected. Extreme care was taken not to do anything that might hurt someone; the only fires set were far from buildings; windows were smashed only when no one would be in the way of broken glass. All this was in dramatic contrast with the police, whose use of force was almost exclusively aimed at hurting people.

Finally, it's hard to deny that the black bloc in Seattle got a point across. All along, they were arguing that organizations like the WTO are yet another addition to a growing apparatus of global rule, in which the powers of the state hardly even pretend to respond to the needs of local communities, and are simply put at the service of multinational corporations. How could mere words bring this home so vividly as the spectacle of the mayor of Seattle declaring martial law in order to protect Starbucks? ■

David Graeber teaches anthropology at Yale University.



N30 Black Bloc Communique by ACME Collective 10:48am Sat Dec 4 '99

On November 30, several groups of individuals in black bloc attacked various corporate targets in downtown Seattle. Among them were (to name just a few):

- FIDELITY INVESTMENT (major investor in Occidental Petroleum, the bane of the U'wa tribe in Colombia)
- BANK OF AMERICA, US BANCORP, KEY BANK and WASHINGTON MUTUAL BANK (financial institutions key in the expansion of corporate repression)
- OLD NAVY, BANANA REPUBLIC and the GAP (as Fisher family businesses, rapers of Northwest forest lands and sweatshop laborers)
- NIKETOWN and LEVI'S (whose overpriced products are made in sweatshops)
- MCDONALD'S (slave-wage fast-food peddlers responsible for destruction of tropical rainforests for grazing land and slaughter of animals)
- STARBUCKS (peddlers of an addictive substance whose products are harvested at below-poverty wages by farmers who are forced to destroy their own forests in the process)
- WARNER BROS. (media monopolists)
- PLANET HOLLYWOOD (for being Planet Hollywood)

PHOTO: TIM MATSU/LIAISON AGENCY/NEWSMAKERS

A SECRET WORLD

BY JOHN VIDAL
SEATTLE

Four tables, each 30 yards long. More than 100 ministers each sit opposite a diplomat or civil servant. A few observers line two walls. It is standing room only in Hall 6B. Of those present, 90 percent are middle-aged men in dark suits. The women wear bright scarves. The only signs of male sartorial individuality are one hat, one bow tie, one pair of dark glasses, one African robe and one pink waistcoat.

The working party of the World Trade Organization's "Singapore Group and Other Issues" is forbidden territory to the 3,000 journalists in Seattle and the non-governmental organizations baying for information about the talks. But to the thousands who are in Seattle to express their misgivings about the WTO, and who have been arrested for marching

outside the convention center in pursuit of accountability and open negotiations, it is like the far side of the moon.

I have access to the talks because, in its incompetence, the WTO has issued me the wrong accreditation. Instead of a green press card they have given me a nice blue delegate one. In short, I am a sort of least developed country. Should anyone ask, I represent either San Serife, a country in the Indian Ocean with infinitely changing geographical position or, preferably, any one of the 30 countries who are WTO members but who are too poor to send even one delegate to the talks.

The five WTO working groups are where countries meet each day to thrash out some common ground. If the gap between them is too large, then they either enter bilateral agreements

with each other or they can be called in by Michael Moore, the WTO director general, to negotiations where he personally bangs heads together. It's called international diplomacy.

In the packed hall, the afternoon meeting is trying to establish whether the WTO should include talks over investments and competition in the next round of negotiations. Investment and competition are huge issues, with ramifications for democracy and sovereignty. If the WTO secretariat can get countries to reach any sort of agreement, these issues will be on the new trade agenda, and three years from now, after long talks in Geneva, all 135 WTO countries might have to amend their laws to allow, say, foreign companies equal access to their markets.

The non-governmental groups are deeply worried that this would be a charter for transnational companies to go anywhere they like. They fear that eventually no country will be allowed to protect its own national interests. It seems there should be a stirring debate. The delegates look bored. The gavel bangs and the deputy chair announces that many ministers have been detained not by protesters, but by talks with President Clinton. But the meeting should go ahead, he says. "For clarity's sake," he continues, the issues on the table "refer to paragraphs 12, 25, 26, 32, 33, 51, 52, 41, 56" and a dozen others. No one bats an eyelid. Everyone—except me—knows to which paper he is referring.



"Some basic political decisions need to be taken," he says. The question is whether member countries are ready to start liberalizing and harmonizing their investment and competition laws, or whether they should continue to debate as they have for the past three years.

The floor is open and the European Union is the first to put its flag up to talk. "Our objective is to launch negotiations. We are not, repeat not, interested in a face-saving formula. Our only objective is to launch the negotiations."

Chair: "Your position is clear. Japan?"

Japan: "We approach the 21st century. Some countries are concerned about civil society [issues]. I am confident we can resolve those issues. A progressive approach is needed. Due

consideration should be given to developing countries, but Japan is opposed to a two-stage approach."

Chair: "Korea?"

Korea: "We cannot accept a two-step approach on investment. It should be included in the next round. If we succeed in putting investment on our agenda, our efforts will be more efficient, the credibility of countries will be enhanced. We have ample evidence that investment should be in the next round. But we should start with a modest and humble approach."

Most rich countries, including Britain, want the new round to include the investment and competition clauses. The poor say repeatedly that they are not ready and it would be unfair because they do not yet have the basic laws in place. The richest 29 countries in the world tried to get a major investment treaty passed in the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) last year. They failed after campaigning led by more than 600 environmental and consumer groups around the world. The investment issue was passed to the WTO.

The pace, after 40 minutes, is telling. Several countries are visibly suffering. Ireland is reclining alarmingly. The only sign of life is a Latin American delegation where the minister could well be in love with his adviser. Her eyes flash. They lean together and cannot stop whispering.

The chairman arrives from lunch with Clinton and joins the four other silent men on the top table. He is brisk: "Hong Kong/China?"

The new recruit to the WTO speaks in a clipped British accent: "However desirable it is to get into negotiations, at this late stage, well beyond the 11th hour, it is clear that no consensus exists."

Outside the hall, tear gas and rubber bullets are being used on protesters. In the meeting, faint snoring can now be heard coming from an unidentifiable observer. A mobile phone wakes him up with a start. A female delegate from the Democratic Republic of Congo is swaying slightly. And so the meeting continues with the poorer countries more or less against the proposals and the middle-income ones swinging both ways.

The delegate from the Czech Republic booms his approval for further liberalization but the United States is hesitant, if only because it is worried that the proposal to liberalize investments and competition might rebound on its own protectionist attitude toward agriculture. "We feel it's important not to prejudge the issues," says a squeaky American voice. "Agreement must be reached at a certain point but a different approach is needed." He suggests substituting a "more focused way" and urges the other delegates to "listen to civil society." Panama's speech brings on an attack of the yawns among delegates. Nigeria, the Dominican Republic and the Central African Republic are now holding hands to their mouths. Chattering starts to reverberate. Happily for all, Morocco says his piece in fewer than 20 words. The chair congratulates him.

In the far distance, one delegate is blowing bubblegum. One by one, the countries say their bit, but it looks as if the gap is far too wide to be bridged. The developing countries can breathe a sigh of relief.

Probably. ■

A version of this article originally appeared in the London Guardian.

REAL FREE TRADE

BY DEAN BAKER

In the wake of the victory in Seattle, it is time for progressives to rethink attitudes toward trade. For too long we have allowed the other side to frame the agenda, including the language of the debate.

Starting at the beginning, this debate is not about the merits of free trade. The World Trade Organization agenda is very protectionist when it advances corporate interests. Specifically, extending copyright and patent protection to every corner of the globe has been a major issue before the WTO. While the WTO advocates don't speak of them in these terms, copyrights and patents are forms of protectionism. In a free market, anyone could freely reproduce copies of Microsoft Word or AZT and sell them to whomever they want.

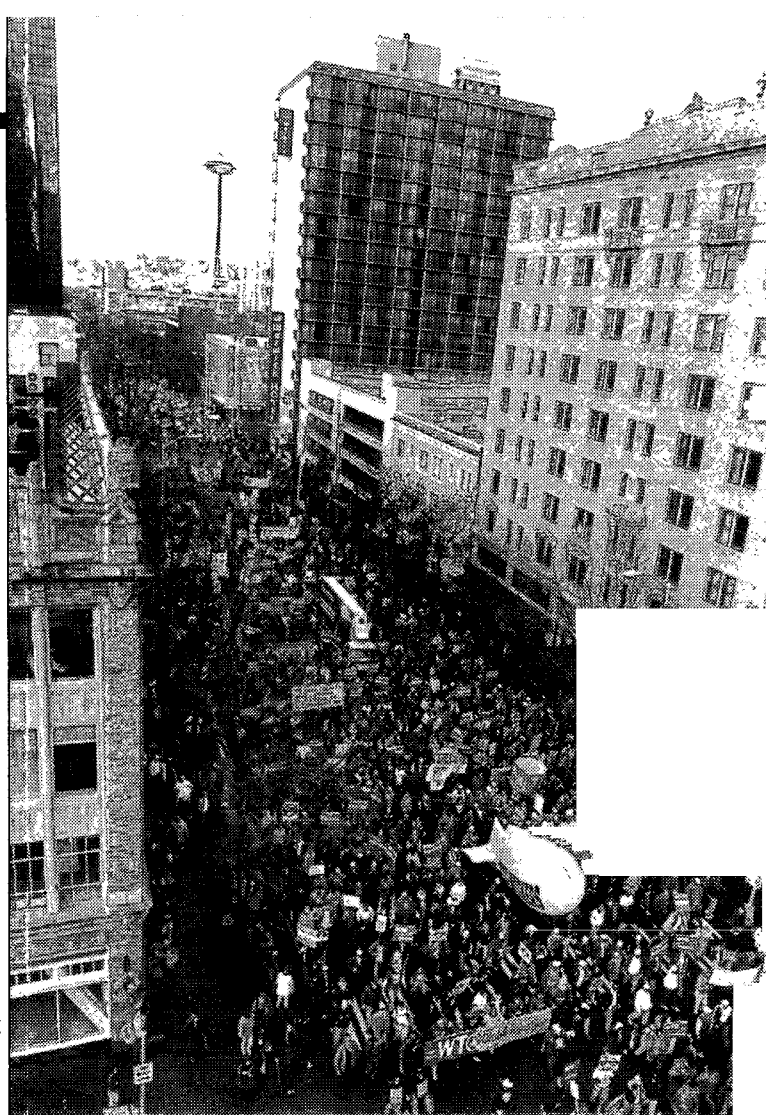
Copyrights and patents are enormously costly forms of protection. Software that could be transferred at little or no cost can instead be sold for hundreds of dollars if it is subject to copyright protection. Patents often raise the price of drugs by several hundred or thousand percent compared with their free market price. In many cases, patents make lifesaving drugs altogether unaffordable for people in developing nations. By contrast, protection in the form of tariffs or quotas rarely raises the price of goods by more than 15 to 20 percent.

It also is no accident that only certain types of labor have been placed in competition in world markets. As a result of previous rounds of the WTO (and its predecessor, GATT), manufacturing workers in the United States are in direct competition with the cheapest labor anywhere in the world. This has been accomplished through years of drawn out negotiations that not only removed barriers to trade in goods, but also ensured the security of foreign investment, so that multinational corporations could feel safe building factories in developing nations.

By contrast, there has been little or no effort to facilitate trade in professional services, such as medical care, legal services or accounting. While many professionals might like to imagine themselves winners in the global economy because of their talent and hard work, the reality is quite different: The game was rigged.

If our trade negotiators had spent the past 50 years standardizing education and licensing requirements, so that smart kids in Mexico, India or Malaysia had the same chance of becoming doctors practicing in the United States as a kid growing up in the New York suburbs, doctors would be earning a fraction of their current salaries. The same applies to lawyers, accountants and even economists or journalists. Under the existing system, there are enormous obstacles facing foreign professionals seeking to work in the United States. It is only self-serving myopia that prevents this class from recognizing how it benefits from protectionism.

It is also worth noting that this protectionism imposes an enormous cost on consumers. If doctors' salaries could be brought down just to the level of Western Europe, it would save consumers more than \$70 billion a year, at least 10 times the gains from the last round of GATT. If their wages, and those of other professionals, were brought down to developing world levels, the gains to consumers would be astronomical.



If it's important to have free trade to promote efficiency, then free trade in professional services should be at the top of the agenda. After highly paid doctors, lawyers and accountants have had the full opportunity to benefit from the challenge of international competition, then they can lecture the autoworkers and textile workers about the evils of protectionism. As long as the highest paid workers in the United States benefit from protectionism, progressives should not be defensive about measures that protect the less privileged.

Thinking more clearly about the definition of free trade makes designing a progressive trade agenda much simpler. Developing nations should be able to tell the drug companies, the software industry and the entertainment industry to get lost. Let them produce these goods in a free market, with no patent and copyright protection. The corporations that object should be given history books: The United States ignored English copyrights and patents as it was industrializing.

So here's the progressive program:

- 1) No copyright and patent protection in developing nations.
- 2) Eliminate barriers to trade in professional services.

It's a simple free trade agenda that will benefit developing nations and the vast majority of workers and consumers in the United States. Those who oppose our free trade agenda should be dismissed as protectionist Neanderthals. ■

Dean Baker is co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

Teacher's Pet Project

By J.C. Sharlet

Stop me if you've heard this one before. A teacher with a basketful of bright ideas and a whole lotta heart takes on a classroom of kids everyone else has given up on. There's a quiet one, a lovable, troublesome one, the one-who-can't-be-saved, and plenty of fresh talkers. They're ready to chew up Teach and spit her out, but she has got a surprise in store: just call it Imagination.

Once Teach has broken through to the kids, introduced them to the magic

Educating Esmé: Diary of a Teacher's First Year

By Esmé Raji Codell
Algonquin Books
210 pages, \$17.95

of words, or math or science, things pick up speed, despite the obstacles thrown down by petty administrators. By now we all know this classroom epic so well that it's no surprise to learn that the toughest kid is also one of the smartest, and that behind the scared looks of the timid one is a sense of wonder. By the end of the year, a near-miracle has occurred: The kids have hope.

In a nutshell, such is the story of *Educating Esmé: Diary of a Teacher's First Year*, by Esmé Raji Codell. If you go for this sort of thing, it's not a bad little book (little indeed; Codell's publisher has used the schoolkid's tricks of wide margins and big print to stretch an underlength essay into a full assignment). Codell, now a "children's literature specialist" as well as a teacher, began her career with a classroom of fifth graders at a rough Chicago elementary school. Surprised to hear an elementary school described as "rough"? Consider as evidence the time when Codell, called out of the classroom, asks a sub to stand

in for a few minutes. Less than an hour later, the sub is on her way home with a flesh wound (albeit only from a pencil). Codell's response is a bit strange, though a relief in its unconventionality; she more or less chuckles. Those little tiger cubs!

Odder still is a story Codell relates at the beginning about her mentor, a teacher named Ismene. While Codell is student-teaching, Ismene is challenged by a boy who responds to every statement with something like Bartleby the Scrivener's "I prefer not to." "Suck my dick," the boy says without fail, and, apparently, without much malice.

So one day Ismene grabs the boy and Codell—as a witness—and drags them to the boys' bathroom. There she orders the boy to drop his pants. "Suck my dick," says the boy, to which Ismene

they're doing it for the kids. The underlying premise beneath such school tales—as in *Stand and Deliver*, *Among Schoolchildren*, *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, etc.—is that teachers, parents, principals, all of society should forever keep their eyes on the prize. The prize being the future, and the future, we are to remember, belongs to the children.

This is a nice bit of liberal logic, in that it allows us to overlook the origins of public schooling in concerns about controlling poor and immigrant children; to write off teachers' unions as tools of selfish adults; and to maintain a redemptive belief in the power of imagination, on which kids, apparently, have some kind of monopoly.

For Codell to access that innocent realm, she gives into the kind of narcissism at which most kids excel, regardless of their marks in school. Codell comments throughout her diary that her real dream was to have been an opera star, and observes that her

happiest moments in the classroom are when she is reading aloud to the children, holding them captive as an audience. She also, just as a treat for herself, insists that her kids call her not Ms. Codell, but Madame Esmé.

Codell provides enough evidence of the kids' enjoyment of her flamboyance to justify it, such as the little boy who, in emulation, demands that he be called "Madame Billy." A more telling moment about her delusions of grandeur, though, comes when Codell faces conflict

with her principal, Mr. Turner. He "gets mad," she writes, "when I say, 'I don't work for you, I work for the children.' But it's true. Isn't it?"

Well, no. The problem with *Educating Esmé* is that it lacks even an attempt to understand what schools do and who they're run by. This book describes a local treatment



COLLAGE: JIM RINNERT

replies, "That, sir, is exactly what I intend to do."

The boy grows pale. Ismene warns him to be careful what he wishes for, leans forward and grins "with all her sharp teeth"—before letting him run along. Now that's teaching!

Ahem. If this strikes you as a little risqué, then bite your tongue and chalk it up to creativity. Ismene and Esmé,

for a system that we are to accept *a priori* is ailing. But it never backs up to consider the nature of the sickness; to offer a case history; to diagnose as well as to prescribe.

Codell has some great ideas for inspiring her students, for making do with the limited resources her school provides, and for doling out discipline that's as creative and effective as her lesson plans. But despite her playful tone, the book's title and its deceptive packaging—its jacket looks like composition paper with a little blue star for excellence on it—this is a school story for adults who are concerned, as the mantra goes, with-the-state-of-our-schools. Codell's book, like most of the liberal side of the debate over this concern, restricts itself to the prescriptive: If only teachers cared more, if only we allowed children's natural intelligence to shine, if only we could provide an atmosphere for the at-risk ones safer than their troubled homes. These aren't bad aims, but they ignore the roots of the problems. And cultural conservatives have rushed into that vacuum to build such a stunning house of cards out of notions of abandoned social values that even liberals are willing to nostalgically look back and wonder: Were schools once better than they are? Were we once better than we are?

Both liberal and conservative approaches are convenient methods for avoiding difficult and pragmatic questions of how things got the way they are, and why they continue to be that way. Codell spars throughout her book with the lazy, lecherous and small-minded Mr. Turner, the principal, but she never really wonders why so many thuggish administrators plague schools. On occasion she resorts to threats of bringing the union in as a defense, but she doesn't seem to have any sense of what the union might do, or if it failed to protect her, why it's so weak. As noted above, Codell doesn't even seem to know for whom she works: her local government, the grown-ups who elect it, the companies that buy it off, the contractors who make their money roofing schools and providing vegetables like ketchup. The one demographic with the least claim to employing teachers are the children in their charge.

Only near the end of the year, when the shine is beginning to wear off and Codell's swearing in her diary like a drill sergeant, does she begin to wise up. When the principal brings in an "educational chiropractor" to "align" the teachers' curricula, Codell reacts with smart disbelief. "Once we close the classroom door," she asks him, "who else but us knows what goes on?" Prefab curricula, she continues in her diary, "are concocted to hide this state of affairs. They can be benign suggestions that make talented inventors out of teachers. Or they can make it so people who don't have anything to share can still work, since their scripts are made up for them."

That's a promising line of thought—that standards and even progressive curricula are as much feel-good stories for grown-ups as they are guidelines for good teaching. But before we can think more about it, Codell has returned to her victories: a teaching award for all her good work! One wonders, though, whether awards for the very best teach-

ers don't serve the same function as public speeches about what the kids should be learning—as pats on the back for the well-intentioned. Yes, Codell seems to be a great teacher, with superhuman energy, but finding more miracle workers is simply a salve on the sore that is the state of our schools. Codell herself observes later on, "They say now, in the education classes, 'You have to be everything to them: counselor, mother, friend.' [But] I don't want to play mama. They need a real mama. And they need a real teacher."

Education reform is going to take more than a few good men and women. If so many teachers are failing, perhaps we should reconsider the conditions they work under and think without sentiment about what public schools were meant to do in the first place, not just wipe tears from our eyes when an Esmé, or for that matter a Mr. Chips, makes magic in the classroom. Tricks, after all, are for kids; fixing schools is a job for grown-ups. ■

J.C. Sharlet is a writer in Washington.

Panel No. 3 (*Madonna and Child*), 1999, by Lawrence Gipe. From *Lawrence Gipe: The Last Picture Show*, at Joseph Helman Gallery in New York, on view through Jan. 22. Gipe appropriates and re-contextualizes Nazi-era images of power and authority.



COURTESY JOSEPH HELMAN GALLERY, NEW YORK

Teen Spirit

By Roger Gathman

It is Thomas Hine's contention that the teen-ager, like the atom bomb and radar, was an invention of World War II. This isn't just a matter of the first use of the word "teen-ager," but the historic conjunction of economic forces and familial conditions that made it possible to afford a largely unemployed segment of the population—and even

The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager

By Thomas Hine
Bard Books
324 pages, \$24

endow that group with enough discretionary income to make it a vital consumer force.

Hine wants to show that things weren't always like this. The narrative of his book, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, is about how youth, which was variously incorporated in the work force in the 18th and 19th centuries, was gradually segregated out in the 20th. Hine's version of the 20th century end of this development makes some odd stops, pausing at Mickey Rooney, then at Bobby Sockers and, 50 years down the line, a "smile strike" by Goths at Disneyland. The latter is a nice image—"hordes of pale, mascaraed Goths" descending on one of the sources of the teen-age imago, the quintessential amusement park, where they infest the benches of the aptly named Tomorrowland and act disturbingly glum. It got under the skin of enough officials at Disney that they banned the black-clad adolescents. Hines is right to see, in this impromptu bit of theater, a picture of teen-adult relations in the '90s: "The mere presence of teens threatens us."

This is a mighty large chunk of history, inevitably skewed toward the white middle-class norm. The book retells certain well-explored episodes, such as the experiment in Lowell, Massachusetts where country girls were employed to run factory looms. It draws out of these stories large lessons in how the past can be idealized. Although conservatives

like to speak of traditional family values as though they are eternal, before the 20th century urban and working families, and even many rural families, couldn't afford to keep the children under one roof. The usual course was to farm them out, either as apprentices or simple day laborers, as quickly as possible. Traditional family values, which require traditional families, weren't available on a large scale until it was no longer economically injurious to force young people into high school. In fact, by partly eliminating them from the labor pool, high school eased pressure on the working class.

High school still bears the marks of its birth. This, perhaps, is the underlying lesson for progressives in Hine's book. Hine does a nice job of showing that education, or the accumulation of cultural capital, was only one of high school's tasks. As he remarks, the economic performance of those who dropped out of high school, compared to those who

Spatulas and French-fry cages are the tools for the only real jobs neoliberal economics envisions for most kids.

graduated, isn't really that bad if you exclude from the comparison those who went on to college. In other words, even in the golden teen years of the '50s and '60s—with a strong manufacturing base to absorb young adults—much of high school was about warehousing.

Today, with that base gone, progressives need to ask serious questions about the fit between education and a regressive industrial policy. The promotion of education in tandem with the promotion of globalism points to a vision of Americans thrust back repeatedly into educational institutions so that they can be shifted from port-o-job to port-o-job at the behest of the market. Looked at in

this way, it is another instance of getting the working class to pay for its own degradation. Because so much of the progressive movement is employed, at one time or another, by educational institutions, there's a certain blindness to the deceptive facade of Clintonite rhetoric. Education has become the last redoubt of feel-good liberalism, while at the same time the real economic situation for young adults is allowed to deteriorate disastrously.

If Al Gore were honest, instead of working to wire up high schools, he'd be pushing for the government to distribute spatulas and French-fry cages—the tools for the only real jobs neoliberal economics envisions for most kids. As Edward Luttwak notes in his recent book *Turbo-Capitalism*, McDonald's employs more people in this country than the top 20 software companies combined—and this includes Microsoft and Intel.

Hine's book comes with a few irritating affectations. For one, a serious sociological chronicle should include footnotes. Hine doesn't, although he includes a bibliography. But I would love to know, for example, where he got such juicy factoids as "a typical prom couple spends about \$1,000." The lack of scholarly apparatus lends the book a certain air of fluff. But the most interesting flaw, if you can call it that, is his use of Erik Erikson's model of identity, an old chestnut that I haven't seen trotted out in some time. Erikson took Freud's suggestions about the Oedipus complex and elaborated them into a model of phased struggles resulting in identity-through-conflict, which became such a popular explanation of childhood and adolescence that the phrase "going through a phase" sank into the folk consciousness.

Hine uses this to try to give us a sense of teen interiority. But this is a book more about external forces than about how they are processed and responded to. Perhaps this is because we are supposedly overfamiliar with the way teens act, think and speak, as this has become the norm that dominates film, TV and music. But the culture industry is ultimately a creation of adults; there are no Rimbauds writing *Dawson's Creek*. By trying to triangulate between images of teens in the marketplace, the history in which teen-

agers gradually appear as a cultural category, and the minds of teens themselves, Hine gives himself a task that is a little too complex for the method of journalistic overview he adopts.

The last 100 pages of the book are strangely enervated, as though Hine is bored with his own project. The melancholy notion of the "fall" of teen-dom isn't really borne out by his own account: We are in for another boom in teens, due

to the high number of births in the '80s. I'd like to think that we are seeing the first fruits of this demographic in the anti-sweatshop movement, the environmental movement and the surprisingly strong and beautiful response to the WTO in Seattle. We just might be in for another "rise." ■

Roger Gathman writes for the *Austin Chronicle* and *Green Magazine*.

destination at the Manzanar internment camp. It's a grim echo of an earlier scene, filmed from the opposite direction, of a festival parade.

Director of photography Robert Richardson often uses extremes—closeups, vistas—that put the viewer into an unexpected relationship with the image. When he combines this with an Ansel Adams-like fascination with natural surfaces and objects, it elicits a respect, even a kind of awe, for the Northwest environment—the ocean, the huge trees, the snow blanketing the forests—and lends a simple heroism to these people's struggle to be decent in the face of racism, internment, war and murder.

On another level, this is a story about growing up. In the process of the murder trial, Ishmael must finally come to terms with his wounds and scars from both romance and war. His choices and challenges parallel those of the society around him, also wounded and scarred and also charged with responsibility. There are times when the weight of these themes can make the movie lumber along, and there are characters who suffer disproportionately. Max Von Sydow plays the film's resident wiseman, as the accused man's lawyer, and he's given a character who's part Yoda and part Gregory Peck from *To*

Past and Present

By Pat Aufderheide

David Guterson's 1995 novel *Snow Falling on Cedars* is a gripping story of a death that might be murder and a trial that might be a miscarriage of justice. It's also an interracial romance between an Anglo- and a Japanese-American, situated in an historical moment of great intensity—Pearl Harbor, Japanese internment, D-Day and the aftermath of World War II. One empathized even with the ugliness and fear in the

Snow Falling on Cedars
Directed by Scott Hicks

book's characters. The choices that lay at the heart of the novel were not rendered as tendentious, didactic or moralistic, although they dealt with subjects such as racism, guilt and injustice. They were decisions you could imagine facing.

The film, directed by Scott Hicks (*Shine*), is a rare example of a movie you can like if you loved the book. It's also a rare case of top-echelon Hollywood production and technical talent applied to ends worthy of their creativity. It evokes strong characters, and perhaps more remarkably, captures the complexity of the novel's layered set of revelations that explain what happened and why. On a small island off Washington State, whites and Japanese fish and farm together. One day, a white fisherman turns up dead. Suspicion turns on the Japanese fisherman who last saw him. Since the murdered man's family had taken back land sold to the suspect's family during the World War II internment, a motive seems clear. The local newspaperman might be able to sleuth out the answer.

But as the childhood lover of the suspect's wife, does he want to?

In *Snow Falling on Cedars*, the past doesn't just shape the present, it is a constant part of it. The central character, Ishmael (Ethan Hawke), recalls how he lost his arm in the war. The memory of nearly drowning in the tropical surf—a memory that echoes with the suffocating sense of panic he is living through as the trial progresses—crosses with a memory of an idyllic beach moment with his childhood love, Hatsue (Youki Kudoh), whose husband is now on trial for murder. Scriptwriter Ron Bass (who



DAVID JAMES/UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Youki Kudoh and Ethan Hawke

also adapted *The Joy Luck Club*) expertly uses the evocative power of emblematic moments or gestures to build the texture of the plot. Ishmael and his father, the local newspaper publisher (Sam Shepard), observant chroniclers helpless to intervene, watch as their mortified Japanese neighbors shufflingly march to their

Kill a Mockingbird. He does the best he can with lines like "Every once in a while ... ordinary people just like you get called on to give the report card for the human race," but even his abilities are taxed. Most of the time, though, *Snow Falling on Cedars* steers with dignity around sentiment and banality. ■

LATE BREAKING NEWS

BY DENNIS HANS

SEATTLE—Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers proposed that rich countries export their protesters to poor countries, since developing nations are woefully "underprotected." He points to China, which had to pretend that a handful of religious oddballs pose a political threat, and to Haiti, whose protesting ranks were thinned considerably in the early '90s. Summers was delighted to announce Friday that China and Haiti have agreed to remove tariffs on a range of rabble-rousing products, from outside agitators to union organizers. Within the next few days, 20,000 will be packed onto freighters docked in Seattle; they should arrive in their new homelands in time for the holidays.

"The key to cementing the deal was the cultural sensitivity of the Clinton administration," Summers said. "We want the American dissidents to fit in, so we insisted that the host governments show them the same courtesies they show local dissidents."

Seattle Mayor Paul Schell said the city saved \$50,000 on rubber bullets by buying in bulk from Malaysia. "Ten years ago, steep U.S. tariffs placed the Malaysian Rib Tickler beyond Seattle's means," he said. "We were stuck with cheap domestic knock-offs. Thank God for globalization."

WTO adjudicators issued their first ruling after the meeting, declaring that window breakers not only committed a common property crime, but had damaged Microsoft's market position. "Because the word 'windows' is linked in the public mind with Microsoft's operating system," the ruling stated, "the act of 'breaking windows' can only be construed as an attack on the corporation's good name." The judges ordered Kevin Bunkee, 21, of Portland, Oregon and Julie Jencks, 19, of Peoria, Illinois to pay Microsoft \$5.1 billion.

Former ABC news anchor and commentator David Brinkley, now a spokesman for agribusiness giant Archer Daniels Midland, was in Seattle to film a commercial. He told this reporter he was impressed with the "energy" of the protesters, then excused himself to rehearse his lines. "Who will fuel the SUVs of the new millennium?" he asked in his distinctive clipped voice. "By converting anarchists into ethanol, ADM can free America from its dependence on foreign oil."



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SYLVIA

By Nicole Hollander

*The Cranky
Woman is
CRANKED
up by A
MODEST PROPOSAL
FROM A WELL-
KNOWN COMPANY.*

*COCA-COLA
is testing A
VENDING MA-
CHINE THAT
CAN SENSE
WHEN THE
WEATHER IS
HOT AND
RAISE ITS
OWN PRICES.*



*WHAT'S NEXT?
HIGHER FEES
in the EMERGENCY
ROOM if you use
it in an EMERGENCY?
LOANS with HIGHER
interest if you're
really strapped?*

*Look on the
bright side,
Honey, CHRIST-
MAS trees are
cheaper in
the summer.*

Nicole Hollander 11-10

Continued from page 30

I can't say I'm surprised by all the fuss, but I'm not sure that it makes any sense. Sure, Sessoms' words were "salty." But essentially they do nothing more than articulate a position that is central to academic conservatism, a pedagogical stance that is gaining influence on campuses across the nation, and the ideology that is the coin of the realm at CUNY these days.

Some context: In 1994, Heather MacDonald, a fellow at the conservative Manhattan Institute, wrote a piece for *City Journal*, a quarterly whose Web site prominently blurbs Rudy Giuliani. ("In the pages of *City Journal*," Rudy writes, "theorists and practitioners meet, and new approaches to governance emerge.") MacDonald's article told the sorry tale of CUNY's "race to the bottom." CUNY was once "the Harvard of the poor," a free, academically competitive university with an overwhelmingly white (and Jewish) student body. When the '60s came along, MacDonald despairs, all that changed: "It was no longer enough for a college merely to educate; universities were called on to enfranchise minority groups through admissions and curricular changes." In 1970, CUNY developed an "open admissions" policy, designed to provide access to the university to any high school graduate. Suddenly, the system integrated. Just as suddenly, the school found itself enrolling students who were ill-prepared for college-level work. The system, MacDonald said, created an over-sized "remediation industry" to bring these under-prepared students up to speed.

Remediation, MacDonald argued, ruined the system. "CUNY's remedial functions are swallowing up all others," she wrote. "Like a compulsive gambler, CUNY continues to direct a disproportionate share of its resources to students with the least chance of success, while academically prepared students are largely left to fend for themselves." (Never mind that enrollment has grown dramatically since 1970; admissions requirements at several CUNY colleges are now higher than they were in halcyon days; and remedial courses are actually a nearly indispensable revenue source for the cash-starved university. Most important, MacDonald overlooks the fact that remediation at CUNY works—students who take one remedial course at the university are just as likely to graduate as those who enroll without remedial needs.)

MacDonald's article was influential. Just five years after it ran, the New York State Board of Regents has given its approval to a plan to eliminate remediation from all of CUNY's senior colleges. As a result of this policy, many students admitted to one of CUNY's senior colleges on the basis of their high school courses, grades and SAT scores will be required to take examinations designed to assess their basic skills. Those who fail will

have their senior college admissions revoked, and will be required to do remedial coursework before they regain full admission to a CUNY senior college.

I've got about 150 pages worth of reasons why I'm troubled about this move. (If you're inclined, you can read them in the very report that contains Sessoms' expletive-laden quotation, available online at www.abcnyc.org). But, in the end, the policy bugs me in the same way Sessoms' words do.

Under CUNY's new policy, students lacking basic skills are a detriment, not an opportunity.

Underlying both lies a profound doubt about the transformative power of education. By CUNY's new remediation policy, students who leave high school lacking basic skills are a detriment, not an opportunity. Rather than taking a shot at filling in their skills gap at the senior college level, the system has decided to send them on—to community college, to "intensive" remedial ghettos, or to the private colleges and universities that compete for the students CUNY turns down.

CUNY wants to be a great institution once again, and under the new remedial policy, it's trying to become great by nabbing high-end students from the Ivy League, rather than by doing a great job of educating the students it already has. In MacDonald's terms, CUNY is stepping away from the slot machine and plunking its money in a savings account. Convinced that working with the under-prepared is nothing more than a gamble, the system is ready to bank on the blue-chip students. There may be less to gain, but there's also less to lose.

Sessoms demonstrates this same ethos. When he voiced his now well-known expletives, he was responding to the notion that one can measure the strength of a college by looking at its "value added"—the skills and proficiencies that students acquire during their years at the school. Needless to say, he thought the idea was full of [expletive]. According to Sessoms, there's just not much value that a university education adds—"if you take in [expletive] and turn out [expletive] that is slightly more literate, you're still left with [expletive]." It's a mechanical construction that leaves no room for a school to take in expletives and turn out gems.

It would come as no surprise to hear a potty-mouthed factory manager or even a nutritionist with an infantile sense of humor speaking this way. From a college president, however, it's disturbing. An efficient factory can't build a first-rate bookshelf from shoddy wood, just as the best digestive system doesn't get much nutritional value from a bag of French fries. But a good college can turn a weak student into a scholar, or at least that's what we used to believe. ■

Thurston Domina is a freelance writer and research associate for the New York City Bar Association's Commission on the Future of CUNY.

[Expletive] Happens

By Thurston Domina

It's the most famous sentence I've been involved in and, although my role in its creation was minimal, I'm pretty proud of it. "[Expletive] in, [expletive] out. If you take in [expletive] and turn out [expletive] that is slightly more literate, you're still left with [expletive]."

The words aren't at all mine. They belong to Allen Lee Sessoms, president of Queens College, one of the more prestigious colleges in the City University of New York system. Sessoms uttered them at a meeting he held with my boss, four Queens College administrators and myself on Sept. 9. All I did was dutifully transcribe them

in my notebook as they came streaming out of his mouth, transfer them from the notebook to a memorandum about the meeting, and cut and paste from that memorandum into a policy report that I helped research and write, taking care to replace the four-letter words with the less expressive, but less incendiary "[expletive]."

From the policy report, which was prepared in response to recent changes in the CUNY system's admissions policies, the sentence made its way to the *Queens College Quad*, a student newspaper. From the *Quad*, it wound up in *Newsday*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the AP wires, the *New York Times* and a couple of local TV news programs. Sessoms isn't about to thank me for my help. CUNY is a political hotspot to begin with, all the hotter for administrators who refer to students scatologically. As the sentence makes its rounds, Sessoms has been facing calls for resignation. And, in his statements to the press, he has flatly denied making the statement, claimed that we fabricated the quote from scratch, and demanded a full retraction. Our report (issued by New York City's Bar Association) disagreed with Sessoms on a number of crucial issues. His suggestion seems to be that we put these nasty words in his mouth to undermine his conservative politics. (Meanwhile, his lawyer, who was at the original meeting, has admitted that Sessoms used a "salty term to describe under-prepared students.")

Continued on page 29